NARUTO

SHONENJUMP MANGA

Story & Art by

Masashi Kishimoto

volume 11

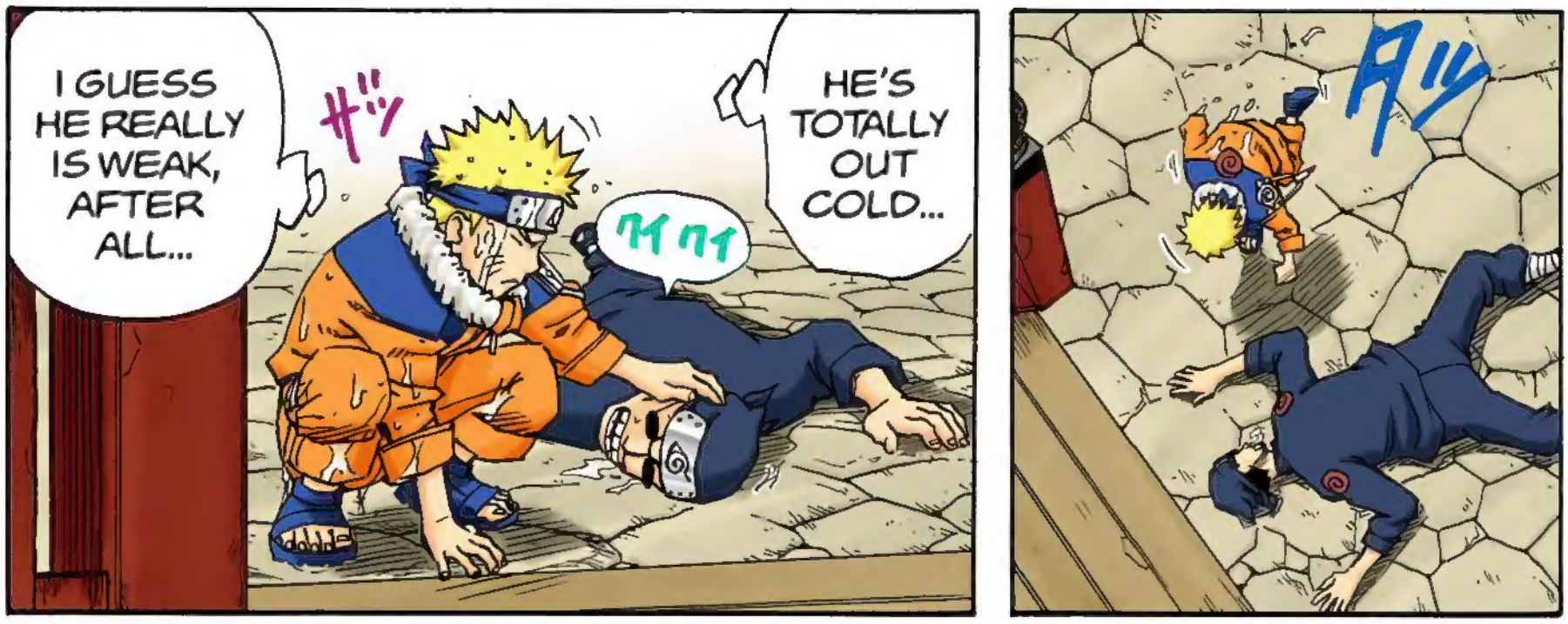
岸本斉史

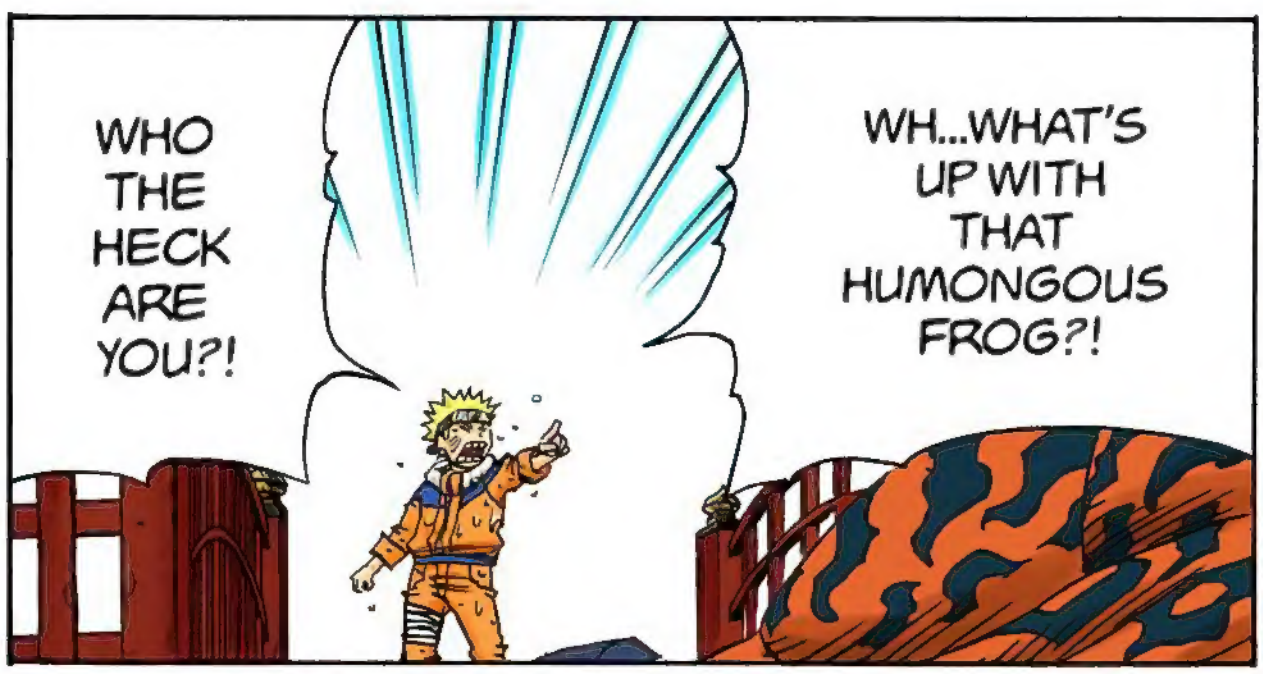
Recently, my editor has been taking me out to really tasty eateries more and more often. I ate fugu (blowfish) for the first time in my life, and I've gotta tell you, it's real yummy, everybody! Next time, I want to spin my plate of fugu on top of my chopsticks before I eat it!

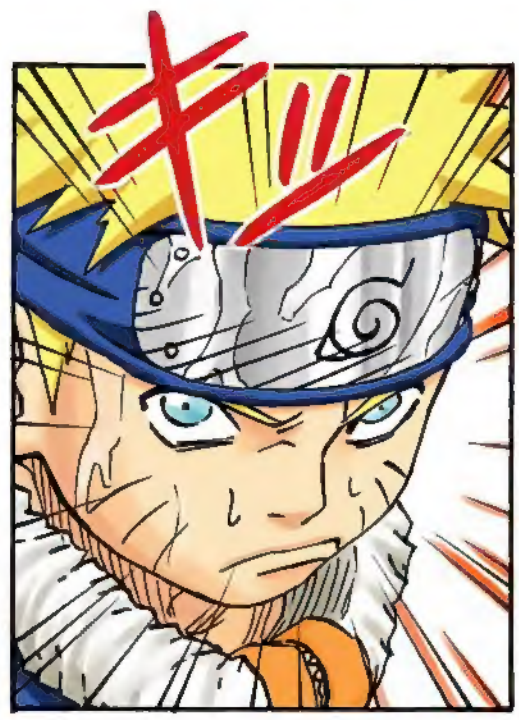
—*Masashi Kishimoto, 2002*

Author/artist Masashi Kishimoto was born in 1974 in rural Okayama Prefecture, Japan. After spending time in art college, he won the Hop Step Award for new manga artists with his manga **Karakuri** (Mechanism). Kishimoto decided to base his next story on traditional Japanese culture. His first version of **Naruto**, drawn in 1997, was a one-shot story about fox spirits; his final version, which debuted in **Weekly Shonen Jump** in 1999, quickly became the most popular ninja manga in Japan.

ナンバー91：MAKE ME YOUR DISCIPLE?!







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GOOD QUESTION!

I AM THE MOST HOLY HERMIT SAGE OF THE MOUNT MYOBOKU TOADS, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE TOAD SAGE. PLEASED TO MEET YA!!

WAIT JUST A MINUTE THERE!!

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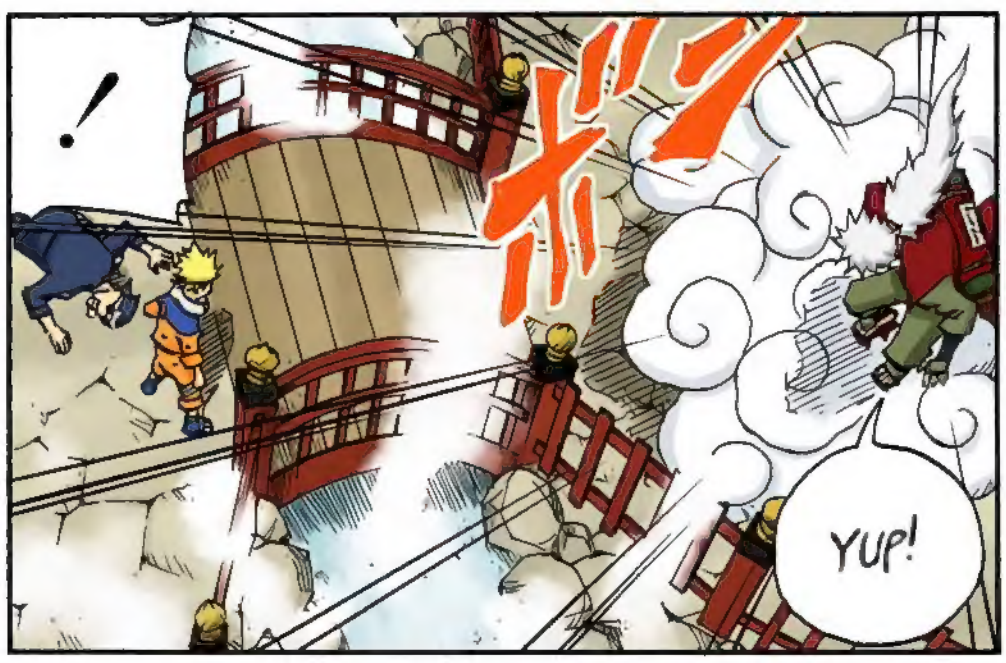
91：MAKE ME YOUR DISCIPLE?!



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HE INTERFERED WITH MY RESEARCH!

RESEARCH...?

I'M A WRITER... I WRITE NOVELS...!

HEY, YOU! PERVY SAGE! WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT HIM, HUH?

HE WAS SUPPOSED TO OVERSEE MY TRAINING...

...BUT YOU KNOCKED HIM OUT!

MAKE-OUT PARADISE

...LIKE THIS ONE!

IT'S GOTTEN QUITE FAMOUS!

OH! YOU'VE HEARD OF IT?

THAT'S--!

OH--!

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IT'S A DIRTY BOOK! IT'S INDECENT!

YES, I HAVE HEARD OF IT!!

F...FOOL!

I AM NO ORDINARY LECH!

THE PEEPING PROVIDES ME WITH THE INSPIRATION TO PRODUCE BETTER WORK...

IF YOU WERE MY AGE, IT COULD BE WRITTEN OFF AS MISCHIEF...

...BUT YOU'RE MIDDLE-AGED, SO IT'S CLEAR-CUT CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR!

BESIDES, WHAT THE HECK KIND OF RESEARCH WAS THAT?!

YOU WERE JUST PEEPING ON THE WOMEN'S BATH, YOU PERV!!

油

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...TRAINING?

YOU MEAN THE WALKING-ON-WATER DRILL YOU WERE DOING JUST NOW?

Y-YOU KNOW THAT EXERCISE?!

ALL I WANT TO KNOW IS, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT MY TRAINING?!

LIAR!! I DON'T WANT TO HEAR YOUR EXCUSES!!

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THEN DO YOUR DUTY...

...AND TAKE OVER AS THE SUPERVISOR OF MY TRAINING!

OOPS...

AND I ABSOLUTELY HATE MEN!!

I CANNOT STAND RUDE JERKS!

THAT MAKE-OUT PARADISE BOOK, IT WAS THE COOLEST, REALLY...

LIAR! THAT NOVEL IS FOR ADULTS ONLY!

I'M A POWERFUL SAGE! I'M NO FOOL TO BE TWIRLED ON A STRING AROUND THE FINGER OF A GREENHORN LIKE YOU...

SHEESH... WHAT A DESPICABLE BRAT!

FLATTERY WILL GET YOU NOWHERE!

AW, MAN! WELL, IN THAT CASE...

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I LIKE IT A LOT!!

HOW DO YOU LIKE ME NOW? ♡

TAKE THIS!!

WHAT AN IDIOT...

.....

NINJA CENTER-FOLD!!!

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I CALL IT NINJA CENTER-FOLD, BUT...

ER...

WH... WHAT'S THIS TECHNIQUE CALLED?!

EH?! WELL?!

YOU'RE MY TYPE OF GAL!

...I HAVE A FEELING... THAT ADULTS ARE EXTREMELY VULNERABLE TO THIS TECHNIQUE...

WHOA! WHAT IMAGINATION!

YOU'RE A GENIUS!!

...WHAT IS IT?

ONE CONDI-TION...?

BUT THERE'S ONE CONDI-TION.

YUP!

THEN YOU'LL OVERSEE MY ♡ TRAINING...? ♡

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!

Y...YOU HAVE TO STAY LIKE THAT...

...THE ENTIRE TIME YOU'RE AROUND ME.

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NO, YOU'RE WRONG!

I AM NO ORDINARY PERVERT!

WHAT?! DON'T MESS AROUND...

I AM...

YOU ARE JUST A PLAIN OLD PERVERT, YOU PERVY SAGE!!

"INSPIRATION," MY BUTT!

あ!!

...OH, MAN... HE HAS NO SHAME...

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...A MEGA-PERV!

KIDDO...

TRY THAT DRILL AGAIN.

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BUT... ALL JOKING ASIDE...

I'LL SUPERVISE YOUR TRAINING.

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YES SIR--!!

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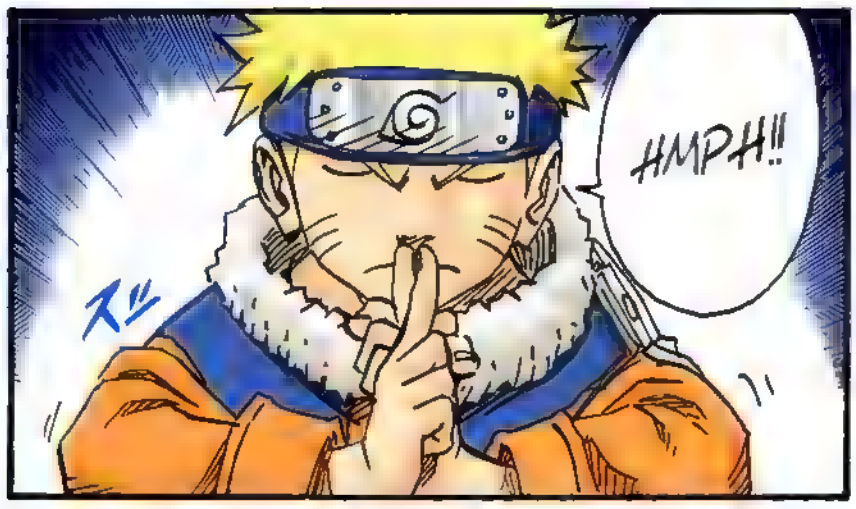

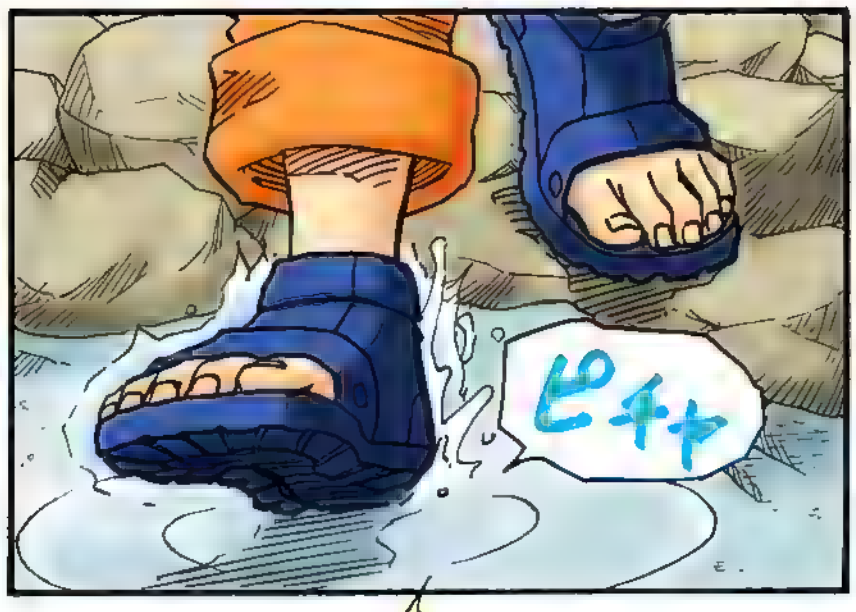

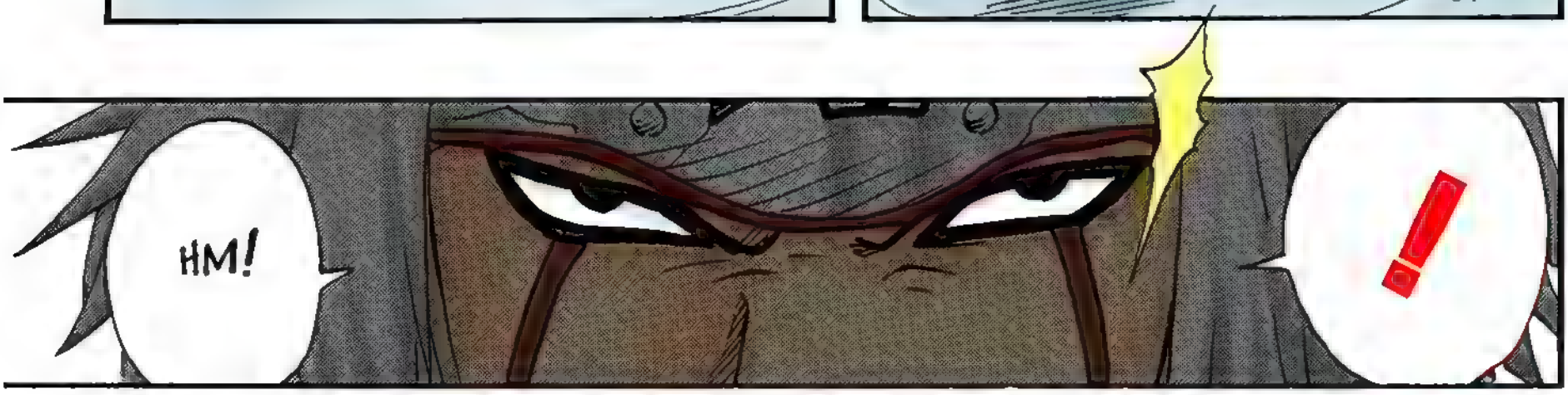

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YEOWCH!

HEY...

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MANIPULATE YOUR CHAKRA FOR ME ONE MORE TIME.

.....

THERE'S NO POINT IN WEARING THESE STUPID CLOTHES!

バチャ

HMPH.

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C'MON, HURRY UP!

!

O...OKAY.

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.....

THE TETRAGRAM SEALS... A DOUBLE SEAL... AN EIGHT-SIGNED SEAL FORMULA, HUH...

SO THIS IS THE FORMULA USED TO SEAL THE NINE-TAILED FOX...?

SO ANY OF THE FOX'S CHAKRA THAT LEAKS THROUGH THE TETRAGRAM SEAL WILL BE SUPPRESSED BY AND MESHED WITH THIS BOY'S CHAKRA...

SIZZLE

...FOR THIS BOY'S PROTECTION.

THE FOURTH HOKAGE... HE DID IT...

NO WONDER HE CAN'T MANIPULATE HIS CHAKRA THAT WELL...

SOMEONE ELSE MUST HAVE DONE THIS...THE FORMULA'S COARSE...

THIS KID'S CHAKRA AND THE FOX'S CHAKRA ARE MIXING TOGETHER IN AN UNSTABLE WAY...

AN ODD-NUMBERED SEAL PLACED ON TOP OF AN EVEN-NUMBERED SEAL...?

HOWEVER... SINCE THEN, IT'S BEEN BLOCKED BY A FIVE-PRONGED SEAL

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KIDDO, COME OVER HERE FOR A SEC.

!

HE REALLY LIKES GIVING ORDERS, DOESN'T HE...

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RAISE YOUR ARMS UP, LIKE, "BANZAI!"

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WH... WHAT FOR?!

...I'D BET IT WAS OROCHI-MARU.

HMPH... IF I HAD TO GUESS...

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FIVE-PROLONGED SEAL RELEASE!!

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!?

I STIMULATED SOME RELAXATION POINTS FOR YOU.

WH...WHY THE HECK DID YOU DO THAT?!

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JUST GO OVER THERE AND TRY WALKING ON WATER ONE MORE TIME... OKAY?

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.....

...THAT YOU LEARN HOW TO CONTROL THE FOX'S CHAKRA...

...IT IS ABOUT TIME ...

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THIS IS AWE-SOME!

HUH? I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, BUT...!

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!

I'LL TEACH YOU A SUPER-SPECIAL MOVE!

ALL RIGHT, KIDDO! GET OVER HERE!

C'MON! WHAT IS IT?!

WAHOO!

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?

FIRST, BEFORE WE GO ON...

...THERE'S SOMETHING YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND.

HMM...

...HAVE YOU EVER SENSED A SPECIAL CHAKRA INSIDE OF YOU?

...TWO TYPES...?

YOU'VE GOT TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHAKRA...

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I SEE...

BUT...

!

...BUT I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER MUCH ABOUT IT.

...NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, I THINK THERE WERE A FEW TIMES...

...WHEN I FELT A FLOOD OF CHAKRA, AND ALL OF A SUDDEN I HAD INCREDIBLE STRENGTH...

...IF I THINK ABOUT IT AS COLORS... IF MY USUAL CHAKRA IS YELLOW, THIS ONE WAS RED OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT...

IT'S HARD TO DESCRIBE, BUT...

...I DO REMEMBER THAT IT FELT DIFFERENT FROM THE CHAKRA THAT I USUALLY MANIPULATE...

COME HERE AGAIN TOMORROW, OKAY...?

ALL RIGHT, IT'S GETTING LATE. LET'S LEAVE THE FUN FOR TOMORROW...

I'LL TAKE THIS GUY TO THE PLACE WHERE I'M STAYING...

HUH...?

GOOD, GOOD...!

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I WAS PLANNING TO ATTACK YOU WHILE YOU SLEPT...

I GIVE UP... DO YOU NEVER SLEEP?

...WHAT DO YOU WANT...?

...SO I CAN INCREASE MY CHANCES OF GETTING TO FIGHT SASUKE IN THE CHÛNIN EXAM... SINCE I'M THE ONLY SOUND NINJA LEFT.

...BUT I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO FIGHT YOU LIKE THIS...

WHEN THE FULL MOON IS OUT... ITS BLOOD STIRS UP...

I'VE SEEN AND ANALYZED YOUR SAND ATTACKS...

LET'S SEE WHICH ONE'S QUICKER, YOUR SAND OR MY SOUND.

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WH... WHAT THE...?

WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU...?!

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OH, NOT AT ALL! NEVER MIND THAT...

I'M JUST SURPRISED. LORD HOKAGE HAD ASKED US TO SEARCH FOR YOUR WHEREABOUTS... NO ONE HAD FOUND ANY SIGN OF YOU, AND YET... YOU WERE RIGHT HERE ALL ALONG!

FORGIVE ME, EBISU... I'VE STOLEN YOUR PUPIL FROM YOU...

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HUH?

NOPE... SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU, BUT THAT WASN'T IT.

I'M NOT THE TYPE TO SEEK OUT TROUBLE... I'D MUCH RATHER AVOID IT!

I SIMPLY DROPPED BY TO RESEARCH NEW PLOTLINES FOR MY NOVELS...

.....

...DID YOU RETURN BECAUSE OF OROCHIMARU...?

...THAT IN ORDER TO STOP OROCHIMARU, TOUTED AS ONE OF THE THREE GREAT NINJA...

BUT...! YOU OUGHT TO UNDERSTAND BETTER THAN ANYONE...

.....!!

...YOU, LORD JIRAIYA!!!

...IT WOULD TAKE THE HELP OF ANOTHER FROM THAT SAME TRIO...

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KONOHA VS. SOUND VS. SAND!!

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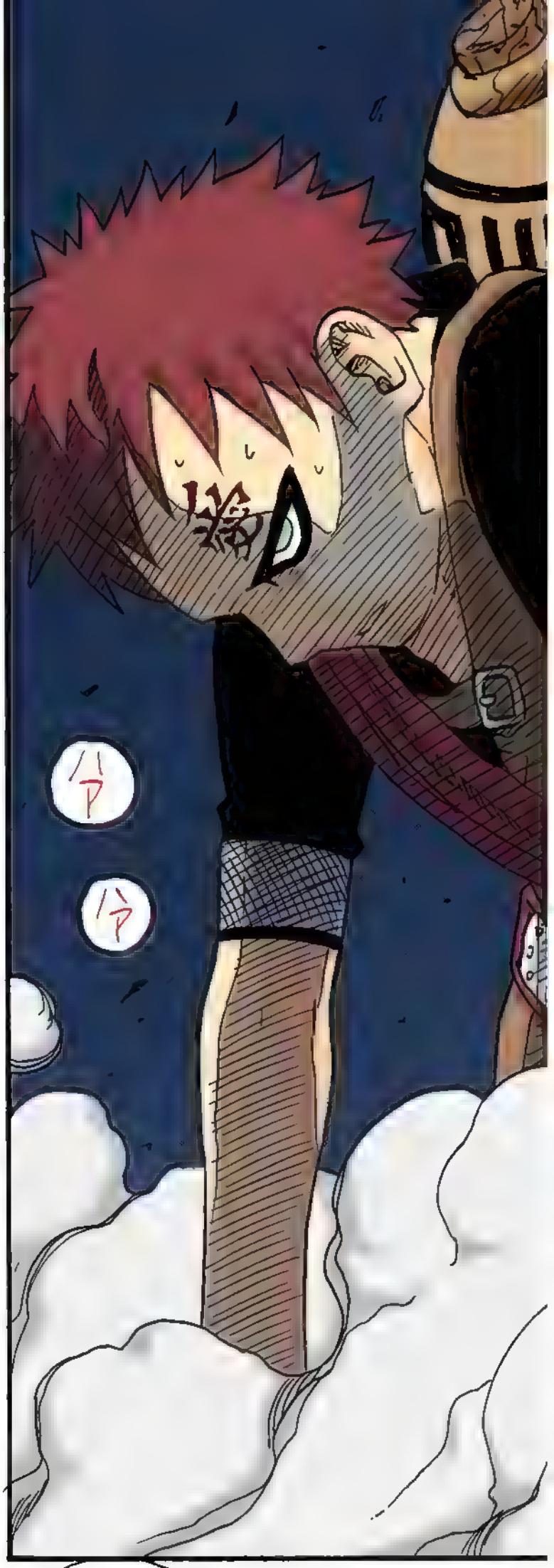

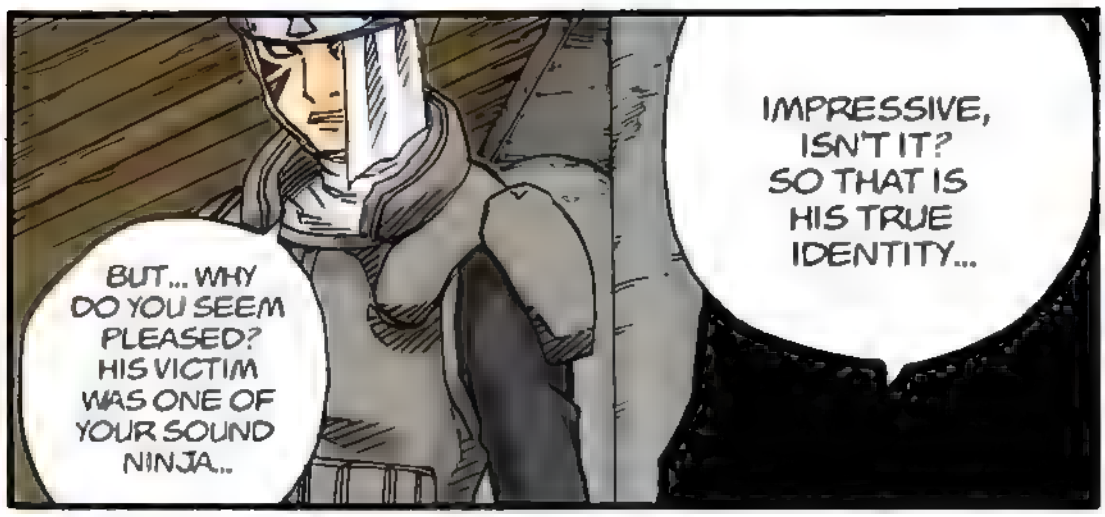

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...WHAT ...?!

OH NO, THERE'S NO LONGER ANY NEED FOR THAT...

...IN FACT, I'VE ALREADY BEEN GIVEN THE ORDER TO CAPTURE SASUKE...

YES... THEY KNOW I'M A SOUND AGENT NOW.

BUT I MADE A... MINOR MISCALC-ULATION... HA HA...

...EVERY-THING ELSE WE'VE PLANNED... IT WILL ALL COME TO NAUGHT!

IF THEY DISCOVER THAT WE'RE SECRETLY MEETING HERE, THE PLOT TO DESTROY KONOHA AND...

THEN...

YOU ARE QUITE THE FOOL.

NONCHALANTLY COMING TO MEET WITH ME DESPITE HAVING BEEN FOUND OUT BY KONOHA...

YOU KNOW... I HEARD YOU WERE OROCHIMARU'S RIGHT-HAND MAN, BUT...

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I WANTED TO SEE WHAT THE REACTION FROM KONOHA WOULD BE...

AND EVEN AFTER THAT, I STILL HAVE A PLAN TO KIDNAP SASUKE.

YOU SOUND NINJA ARE THE ONES WHO PROPOSED THIS SCHEME TO US IN THE FIRST PLACE... BUT IF YOU ALL CONTINUE WITH THESE BLUNDERS, WE'LL BE FORCED TO WITHDRAW OUR SUPPORT.

.....

ACTU-ALLY... TRUTH BE TOLD...

...I WASN'T FOUND OUT.

I DELIBERATELY REVEALED MYSELF TO THEM...

SAND WILL NOT MAKE OUR MOVE UNTIL THE VERY END.

THAT IS LORD KAZEKAGE'S WILL.

.....

WHAT AM I HEARING...?!

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SO...

THIS IS THE BLUEPRINT FOR ALL OUR PLANS.

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...TO YOUR SUBORDI-NATES... PLEASE.

...PASS THE INFORMA-TION ALONG SOON...

I'VE GOT TO LET LORD HOKAGE KNOW RIGHT AWAY...!

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...OUR SUPP-OSED ALLY, SUNA-KAGURE ...

...IS ALREADY IN LEAGUE WITH SOUND...!!

SURE...

WELL, I'M DONE HERE...

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I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE CLEANUP...

OH... AND ONE MORE THING...

...AS A GESTURE OF OUR ALLEGIANCE. THE LEAST WE SAND NINJA CAN DO IS LEND A HELPING HAND.

BESIDES...

NO... I'LL DO IT...

I'LL FIND OUT WHO'S ON OUR TRAIL AND TAKE CARE OF HIM.

...IS NO BIG DEAL.

ONE LITTLE MOUSE...

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ACK...!

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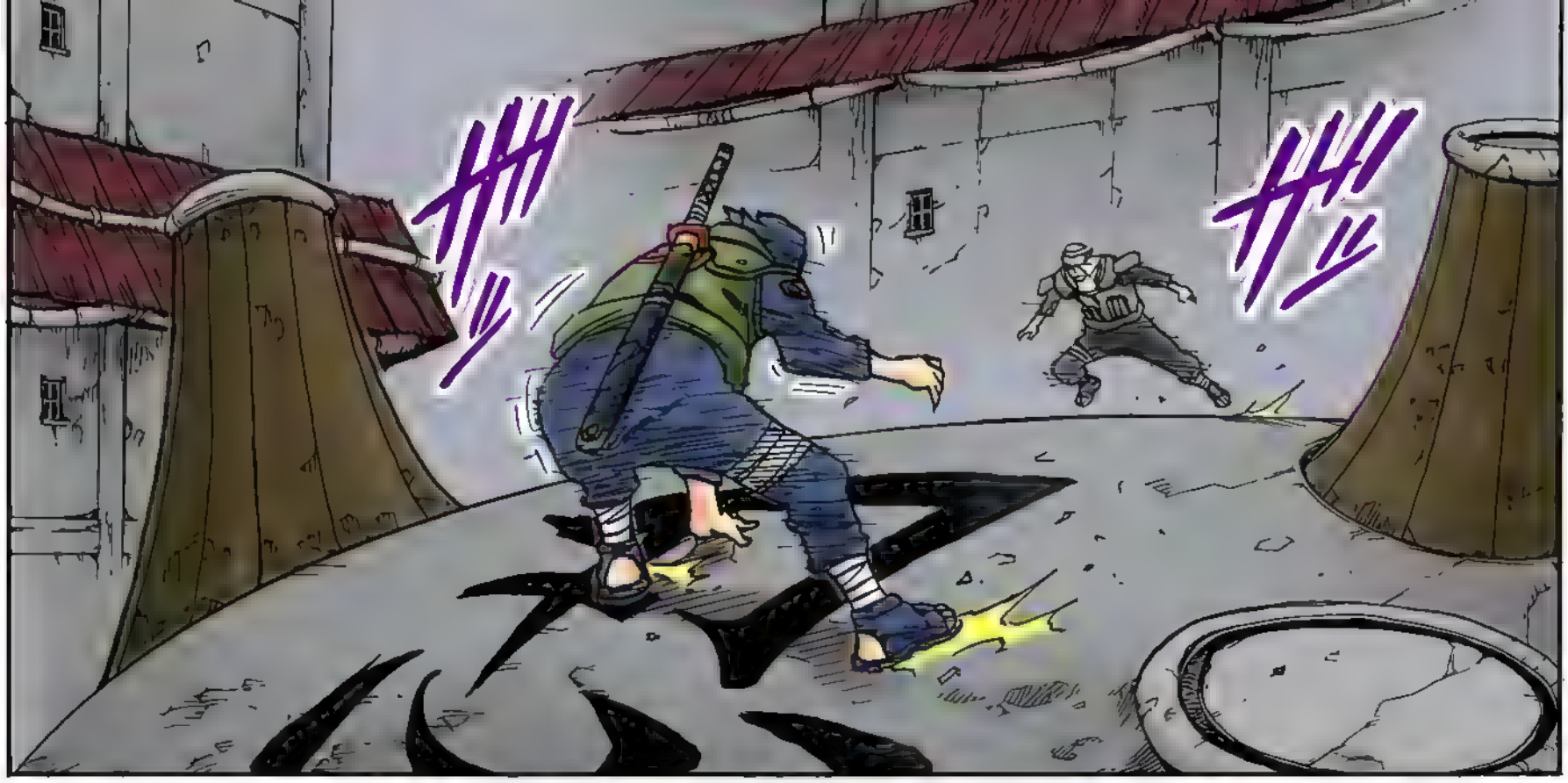
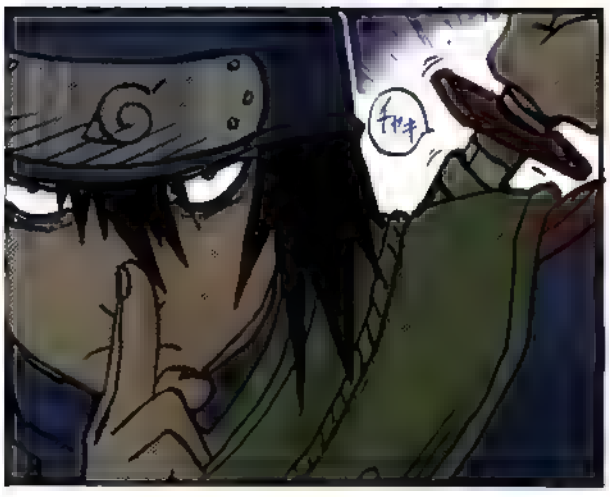
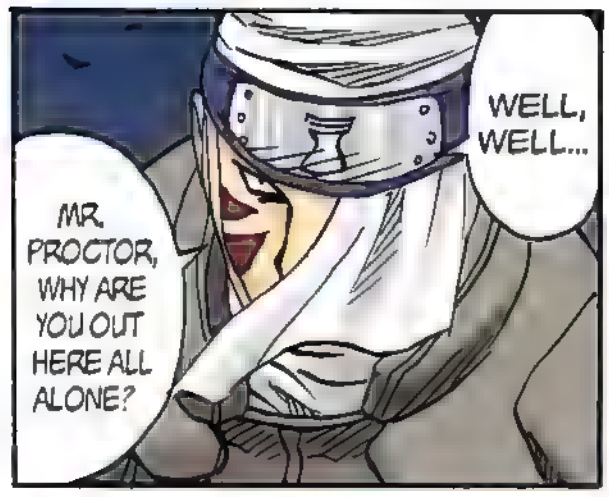




IT SEEMS I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO FIGHT YOU.


WELL, WELL...
MR. PROCTOR, WHY ARE YOU OUT HERE ALL ALONE?

MIKAZUKI NO MAI! CRESCENT MOON DANCE!
KON-OHA STYLE!

!!

THIS MOVE... THE KONOHA STYLE CRESCENT MOON DANCE?

YOU'VE MASTERED IT... AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE! LEAVE IT TO KONOHA TO HAVE ITS PLAYERS LINED UP...

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YOUR BLADE WORK IS BRIL-LIANT_

BUT IT'S A SIMPLE, OBVIOUS TASK TO HALT A PHYSICAL BLADE.

WHAT...? I CAN'T PULL MY BLADE OUT...

...BLADES OF WIND ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO STOP.

HOW-EVER..

WHAT THE ?!

.....!!

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HEY!

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HURRY UP AND SHOW ME THE MOVE!

ARE YOU REALLY GONNA TEACH ME ANYTHING?!

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HEY! C'MON! I'M OVER HERE! EYES ON ME, PERVY SAGE!!

NOW...

I'M GOING TO INSTRUCT YOU IN THIS MOVE.

……

YOU KNOW, YOU WERE SAYING YOU HAD A YELLOW CHAKRA AND A RED CHAKRA.

...DO YOU REMEMBER THE TALK WE HAD YESTERDAY ABOUT THE TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHAKRA?

BEFORE I SHOW YOU...

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...TRY TO MANIPULATE THAT RED CHAKRA RIGHT NOW.

THEN... GO AHEAD...

HMPH! THAT'S EASY FOR YOU TO SAY...

...BUT ...ALL RIGHT. I'LL TRY.

YOU SAID YOU SENSED A RED CHAKRA THE TIMES YOU EXERTED ENORMOUS STRENGTH, RIGHT?

YEAH... I THINK SO...

OH!

YEAH!

WHAT ABOUT IT?

HRM!

...I CAN ONLY SENSE THE SAME OLD CHAKRA AS ALWAYS!

NOPE.

UNH...

...WELL?

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BESIDES, WHAT DO THAT CHAKRA AND THE MOVE YOU'RE ABOUT TO TEACH ME HAVE TO DO WITH EACH OTHER?!

JUST BECAUSE THOSE TWO TYPES OF CHAKRA ARE INSIDE ME DOESN'T MEAN I UNDERSTAND THEM!

QUIT ACTING SO HIGH AND MIGHTY, OKAY?!

SHEESH, YOU'VE GOT NO TALENT, DO YOU...

.....

...THAT, THE "RED CHAKRA" IS THAT OF THE NINE-TAILED FOX...

IT SEEMS NARUTO STILL ISN'T AWARE OF THE FACT...

LISTEN UP, KIDDO!

!

...IT SEEMS THE STIMULI THAT CALL UP THE FOX'S CHAKRA ARE LIFE THREATENING DANGER AND ROILING EMOTIONS.

WELL, INFERRING FROM WHAT NARUTO HAS SAID...

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THAT'S WHY YOU HAVE TO DEVELOP THE ABILITY TO, AT ANY TIME, DRAW ON AND USE...

...THE GIGANTIC OTHER CHAKRA THAT'S BEEN SLEEPING INSIDE YOU ALL YOUR LIFE.

THE MOVE I'M ABOUT TO TEACH YOU REQUIRES WAY MORE CHAKRA THAN YOU CURRENTLY POSSESS ON YOUR OWN!

NOT TAKING ADVANTAGE OF IT WOULD BE LIKE IGNORING A GIFT FROM ABOVE.

AND THIS WAY, YOU WON'T HAVE TO DO THE SAME EXERCISES AS THE OTHERS!

IN ANY CASE... THAT SPECIAL CHAKRA INSIDE YOU CAN BECOME YOUR GREATEST WEAPON.

HOW DID YOU KNOW I HAD THIS OTHER CHAKRA, ANYWAY?

?

WELL, I AM A POWERFUL SAGE...

...LEARNING HOW TO CONTROL AND THUS PRESERVE YOUR CHAKRA SO YOU DON'T OVEREXTEND YOURSELF.

UP 'TIL NOW, YOUR TRAINING HAS FOCUSED ON SUSTAINING OR RELEASING A SET AMOUNT OF CHAKRA...

EACH OF US HAS OUR OWN PERSONAL STYLE.

EVERYONE HAS HIS OWN STRENGTHS AND WEAK-NESSES.

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...SO YOU CAN JUST USE YOUR POWER INSTEAD OF WORRYING ABOUT FINESSE.

BUT YOUR STAMINA IS INCREDIBLE...

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SUCH AS?

...BECAUSE THERE ARE PLENTY OF MOVES AND TECHNIQUES THAT REQUIRE LOTS OF CHAKRA AND NOTHING ELSE!

SINCE YOU'VE GOT THE TWO CHAKRAS, AND YOU'RE A HARDY KID, YOU OUGHT TO WORK ON DIFFERENT EXERCISES...

...ONES THAT'LL HELP YOU INCREASE YOUR BASE VOLUME OF CHAKRA AND TO RELEASE THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE AMOUNT OF IT...

...KUCHIYOSE NO JUTSU... THE ART OF SUMMONING!!

WHAT I'M ABOUT TO TEACH YOU...

WHOA... SOUNDS PRETTY COOL!

QUICK! C'MON, TEACH IT TO ME!

IT'S A TYPE OF TELEPOR-TATION NINJUTSU!

THAT'S RIGHT! YOU MAKE A BINDING BLOOD PACT WITH AN ANIMAL, AND THEN YOU CAN USE NINJUTSU TO SUMMON IT TO YOUR SIDE WHENEVER YOU WANT!

SUMMON-ING?

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IF IT GOES WRONG, I COULD DIE!

WHAT D'YA MEAN?!

BUT FIRST, BEFORE WE START...

...YOU NEED TO COMPLETELY EXHAUST YOUR REGULAR CHAKRA VIA THE WATER-WALKING EXERCISE.

I'LL BE WATCHING, SO DON'T WORRY... NOW GET TO IT!

WAAH!

IT'LL MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOU TO INVOKE THE RED CHAKRA!

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HEY, WHAT ABOUT ME?!

HEH HEH!

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NARUTOMANGA.COM

HUH?

CAN'T... MOVE...

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SHOOT...

THIS IS NOT GOOD...

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DOING THAT EXERCISE FOR ANY AMOUNT OF TIME CAUSES HIM TO FALL APART PRETTY QUICKLY

AS I SUSPECTED FINE CONTROL IS NOT HIS FORTE...

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YES, SIR! FINALLY!

SO... YOU'VE EXPENDED MOST OF YOUR CHAKRA NOW, EH?

WELL THEN, LET'S TEACH YOU THAT MOVE!

FIRST, I'LL DEMONSTRATE ...

...SO WATCH CLOSELY!

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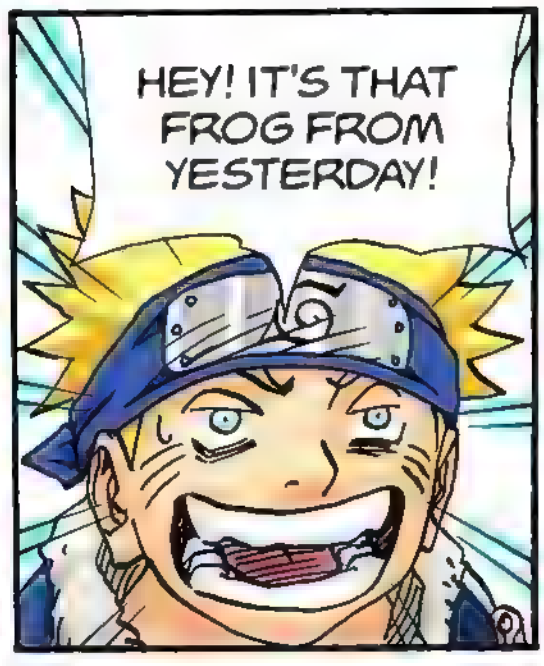
KUCHI-YOSE NO JUTSU! THE ART OF SUMMO-NING!!!



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THIS CONTRACT WITH THE SUMMONING TOADS HAS BEEN HANDED DOWN THROUGH THE GENERATIONS.

FIRST, YOU SIGN YOUR NAME WITH YOUR OWN BLOOD, AND THEN BELOW THAT...

...YOU MAKE A FINGERPRINT IMPRESSION WITH ALL OF THE FINGERS OF ONE HAND!

AFTER THAT'S DONE, WHEN YOU'RE IN A PLACE WHERE YOU WANT TO CALL THE TOADS...

...PREPARE YOUR CHAKRA, PLACE THE HAND WITH WHICH YOU SIGNED THE CONTRACT PALM-DOWN ON THE GROUND...

...AND MAKE THE FOLLOWING SIGNS... BOAR, DOG, ROOSTER, MONKEY, SHEEP.

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KUCHI-YOSE NO JUTSU! THE ART OF SUMMO-NING!!

SO HAVE A GO AT IT!

YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO DRAW UPON THE RED CHAKRA PRETTY EASILY RIGHT NOW...

I'M ON IT!

ALL RIGHT! THAT'S IT?!

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HE REALLY DOESN'T HAVE ANY TALENT DOES HE...

...A...A TAD-POLE?

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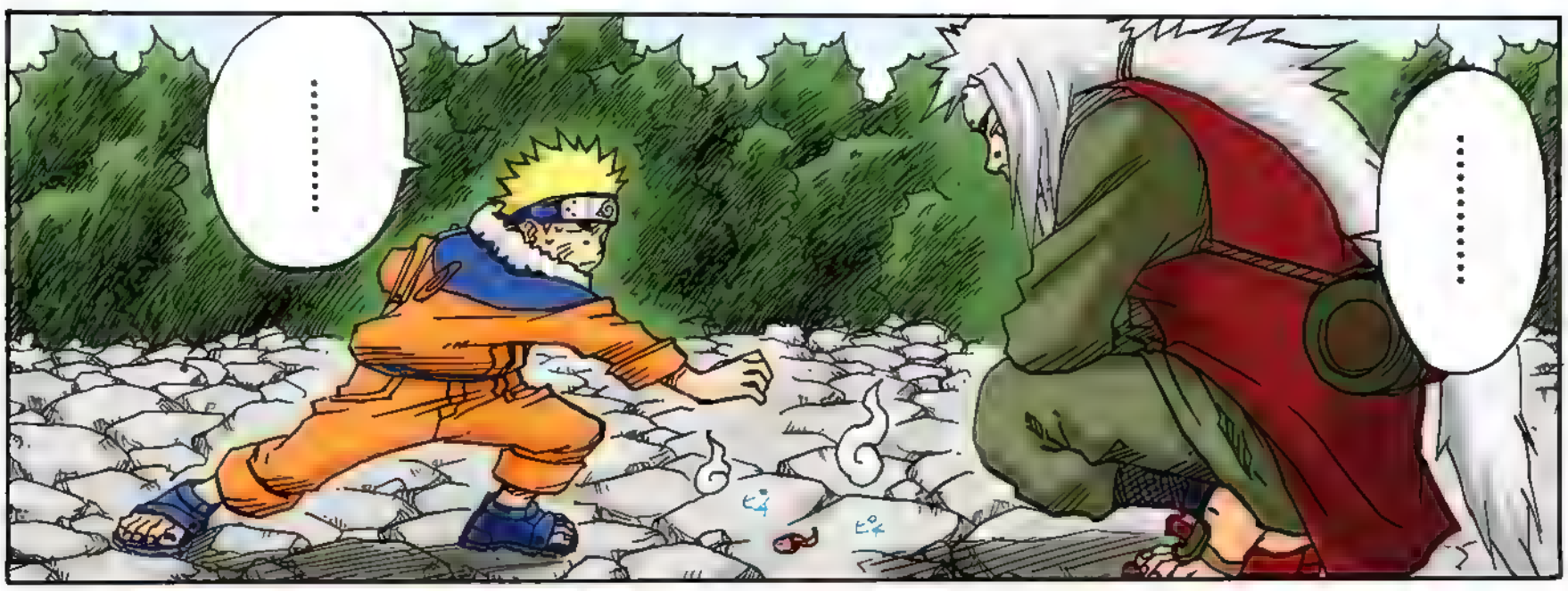
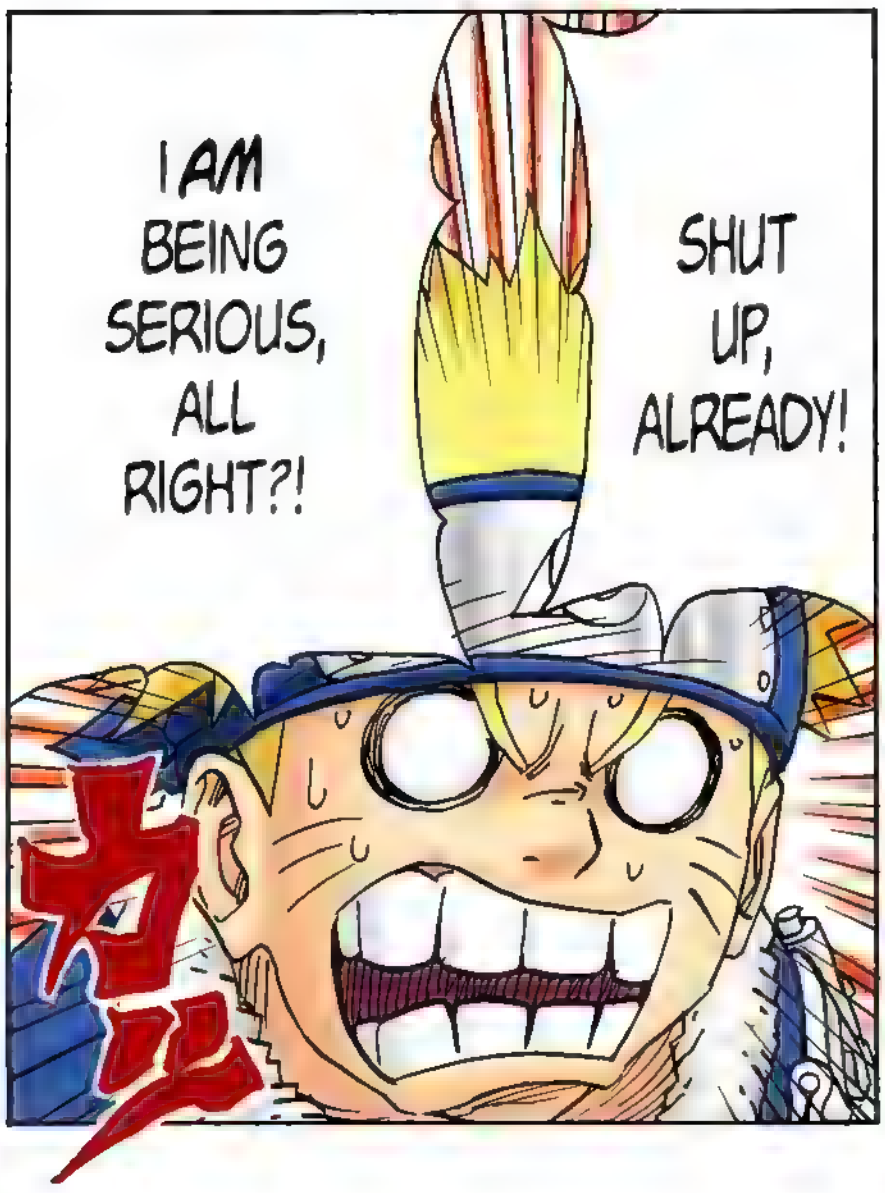
ナンバー 93 : IMPASSIONED EFFORTS... EACH AND EVERY ONE!!





GET SERIOUS! YOU HAVE TO DRAW OUT YOUR ENTIRE CHAKRA AND BE FULLY PREPARED TO DIE!!
WRONG AGAIN! HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU, YOU DUNCE?!
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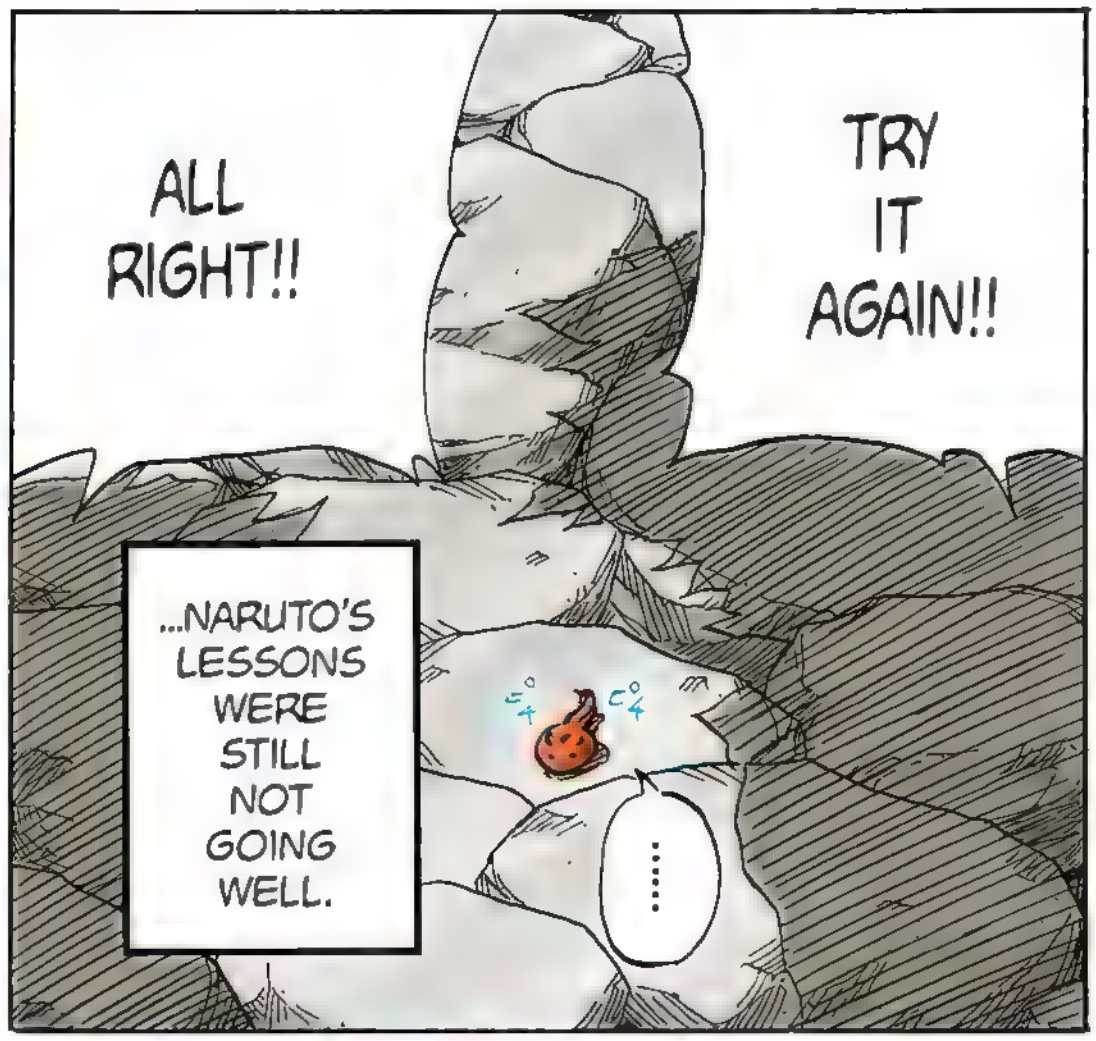

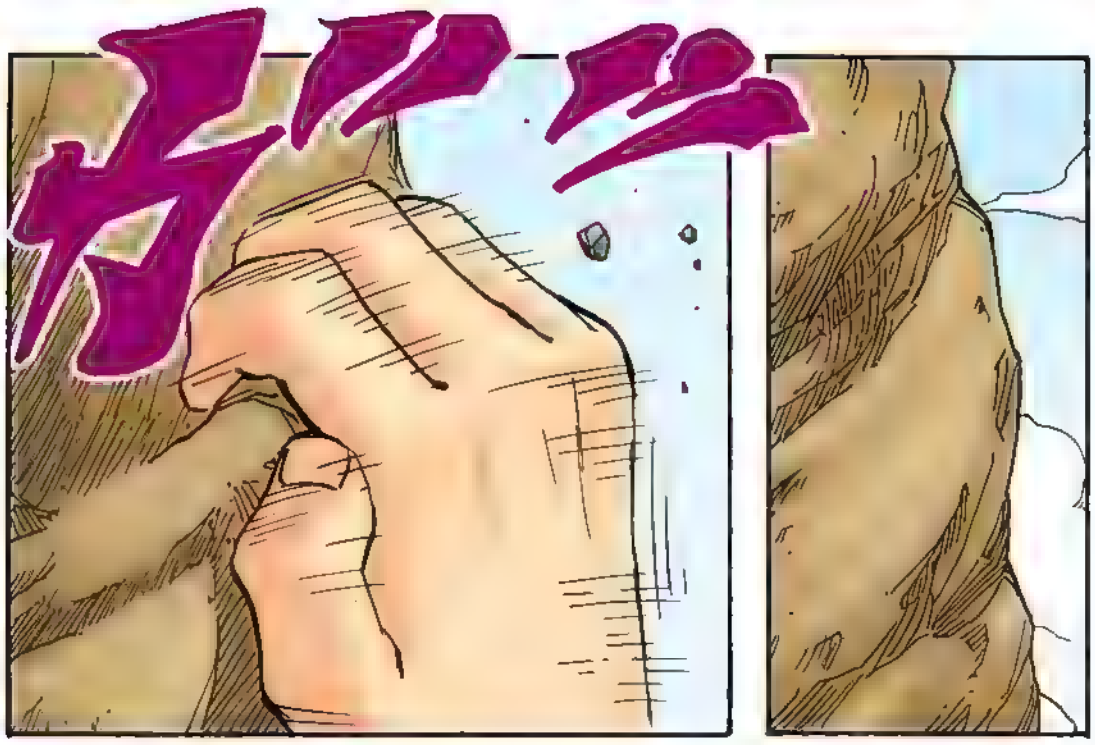

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...UGH, I HAVE REALLY LET MY BODY GET WEAK.

THIS ROCK CLIMBING EXERCISE... SHOULDN'T BE SO STRENUOUS...

IS THERE ENOUGH TIME LEFT...?

ねつじょう
熱情…それぞれ!!

IMPASSIONED EFFORTS... EACH AND EVERY ONE!!

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...HIS BODY WAS DISCOVERED THIS MORNING NEAR KIKYO CASTLE.

SADLY...

WHAT...? HAYATE...?

!

AND GO AFTER OROCHI-MARU...

THEN WE SHOULD POSTPONE THE CHÛNIN EXAM...

HAYATE WAS MOST LIKELY TRAILING THE SOUND SPY KABUTO.

...NO ...WE CAN'T JUMP TO CONCLU-SIONS!

BUT... IT IS PRETTY CERTAIN THAT OROCHIMARU IS PLOTTING SOMETHING.

WAS IT OROCHIMARU?

BUT... WHY?

NO... WHEN HE CON-FRONTED ANKO...

HE WARNED HER NOT TO POSTPONE IT.

HE IS DETERMINED THAT THIS CHŪNIN EXAM, WHERE THE SHINOBI OF ALLIED NATIONS ASSEMBLE, SHOULD GO ON!

OROCHIMARU IS STRONG ENOUGH TO TAKE DOWN A SMALL NATION ALL BY HIMSELF.

AFTER HE DESERTED THIS VILLAGE, HE WAS PROBABLY COURTED BY MANY OTHER COUNTRIES.

THEN... YOU CAN'T MEAN...!

...IT WOULD MAKE ANY NATION DESIRE HIM.

FURTHER-MORE, HE CONVENIENTLY HARBORS DEEP GRUDGES AGAINST US HERE IN KONOHA...

.....

...AND BETRAY KONOHA...?!

YOU THINK THAT OUR ALLIES MIGHT PARTNER WITH OROCHIMARU...

IT'S JUST LIKE THE NINJA WORLD WARS OF THE PAST...

WELL, THE TREATIES OF ALLIANCE ARE REALLY NO MORE THAN VERBAL AGREEMENTS...

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WE MUST NOT MAKE TOO MANY ASSUMPTIONS...

IN ANY CASE... RIGHT NOW, WE'VE GOT TOO LITTLE INFORMATION.

I HAVE THE UTMOST CONFIDENCE IN ALL OF YOU!

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE NOT MAKE A SINGLE CARELESS MOVE.

OUR ENEMIES WILL POUNCE ON ANY SUCH OPPORTUNITY.

WE HAVE ALREADY DISPATCHED BLACK OPS UNITS TO EACH NATION TO GATHER INTELLIGENCE...

...AND FIGHT!

IF IT COMES TO IT, WE SHALL CONSOLIDATE ALL OF KONOHA'S STRENGTH...

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UGH...!

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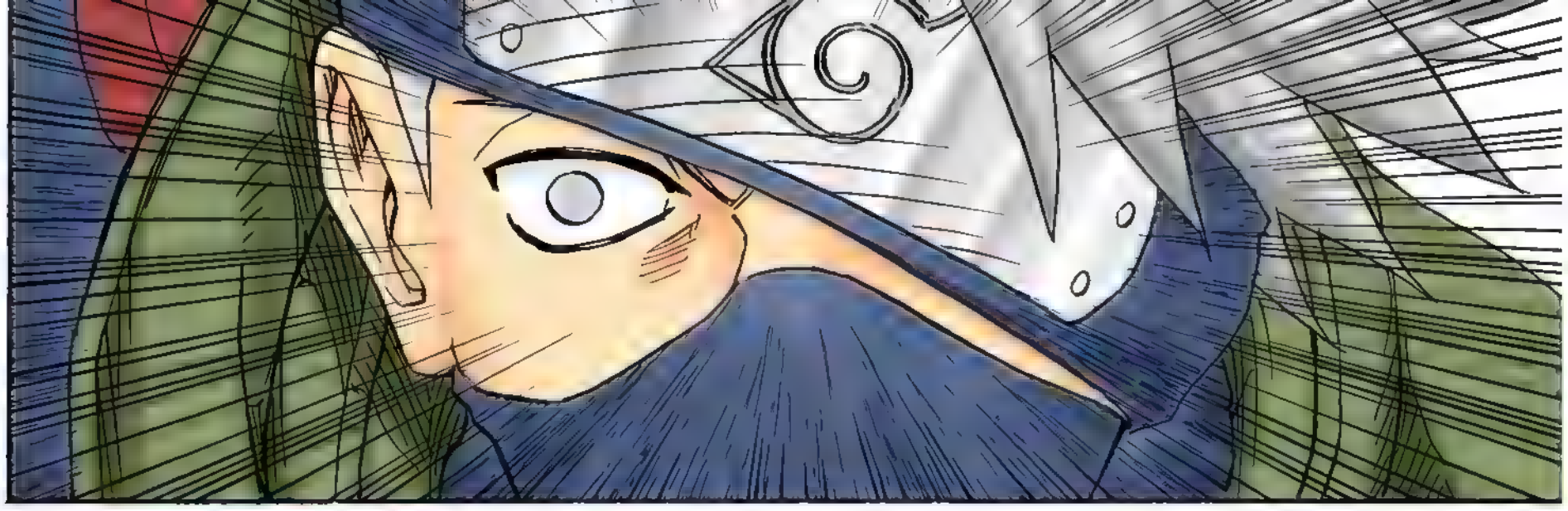

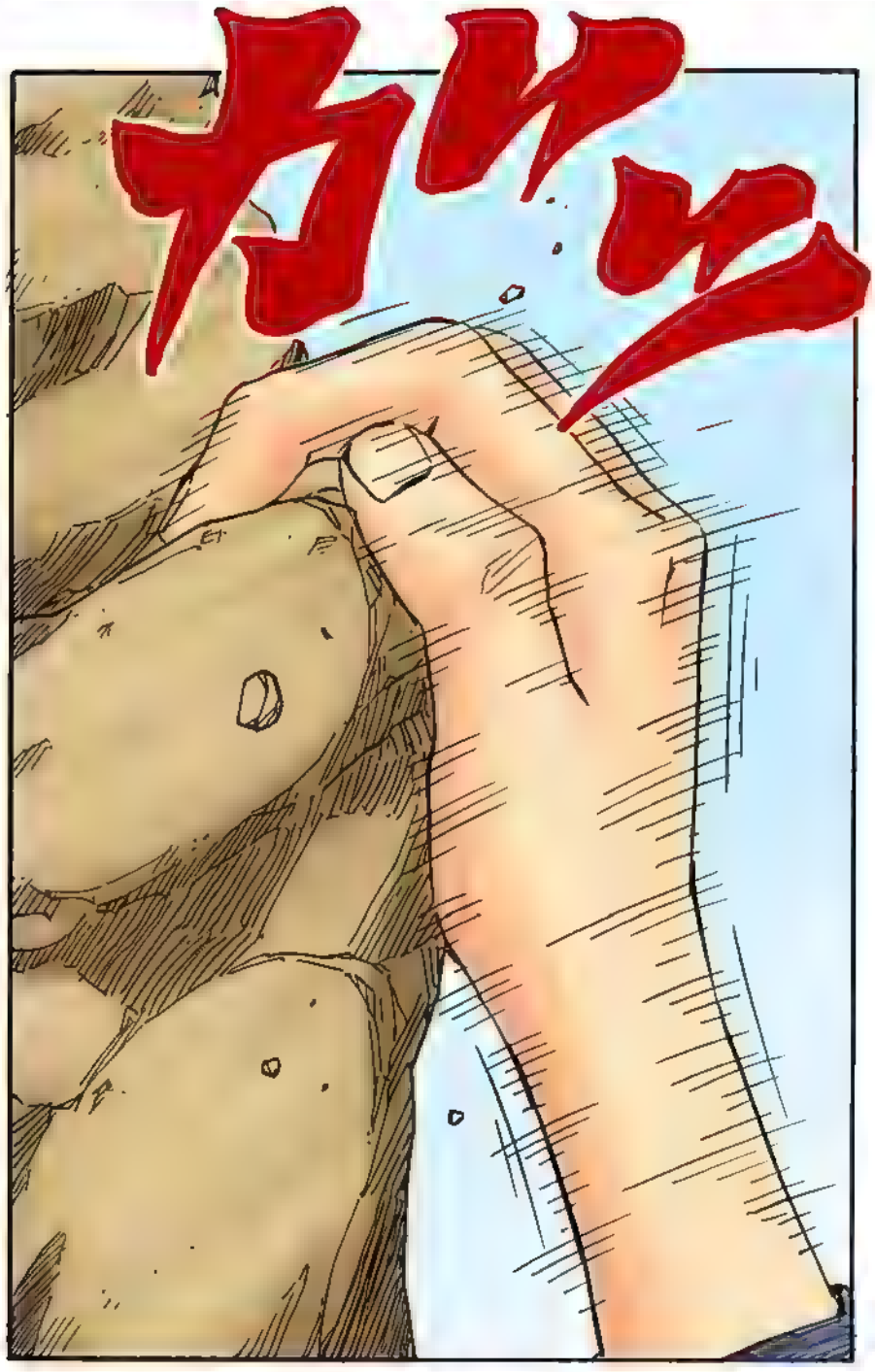

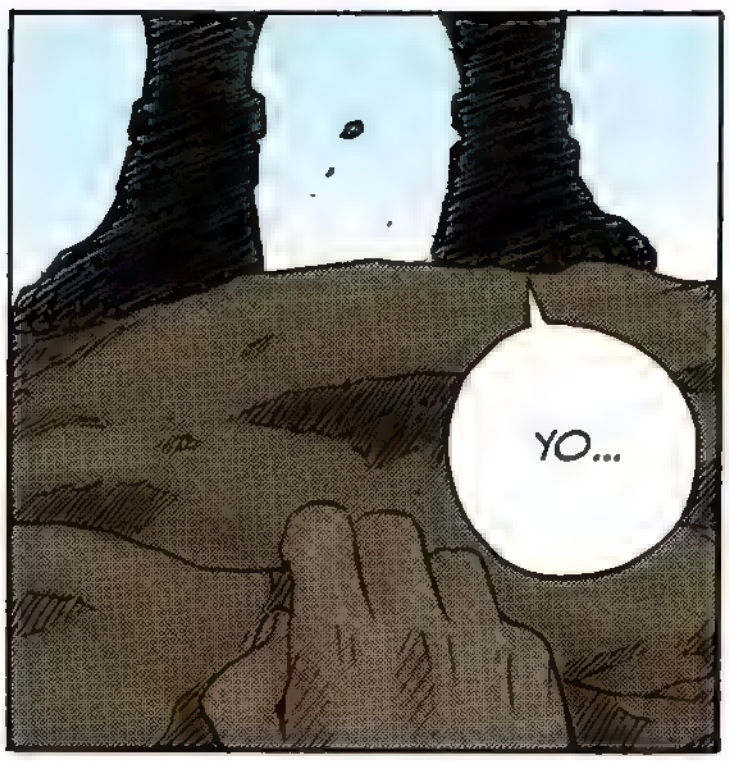

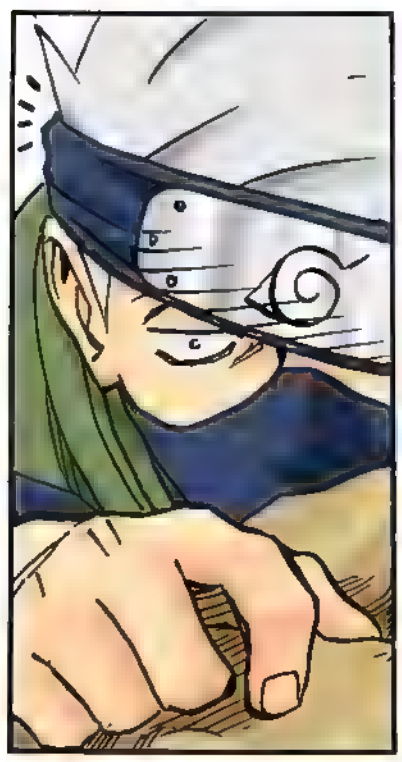

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HEH...

YOU FINALLY SHOWED UP...

I WISH WE KNEW!

WHERE COULD SASUKE HAVE GONE...?

SIGH.

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UCHIHA SASUKE HAS BEEN MISSING FROM HIS ROOM SINCE LAST NIGHT...

EVENTUALLY, SASUKE WILL BE FORCED TO SEEK ME OUT...

.....

...EVEN THOUGH HE'S STILL SUPPOSED TO BE ON STRICT BED REST...

ビク

STOP!

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?

!

!

ギュッ

SASUKE.

WHERE IN THE WORLD DID YOU GO...?

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PLEASE BE QUIET AND LEAVE ME ALONE!

...LEE!

YOU'RE IN NO CON-DITION TO...

LEE! PLEASE... STOP!!

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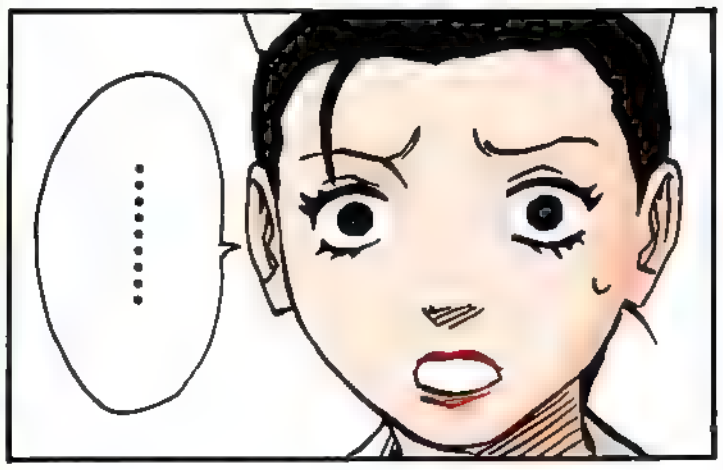

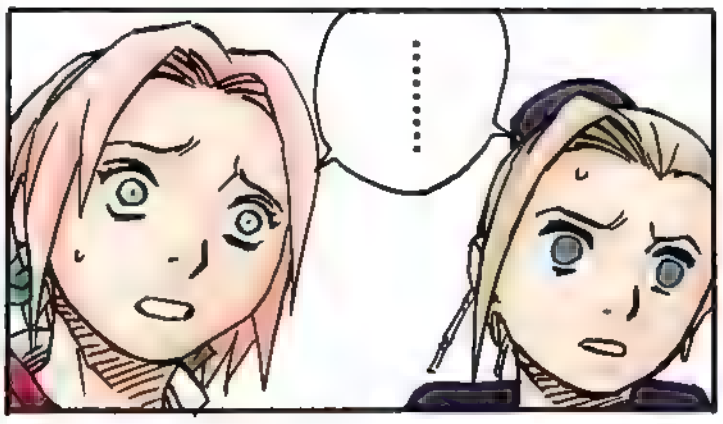

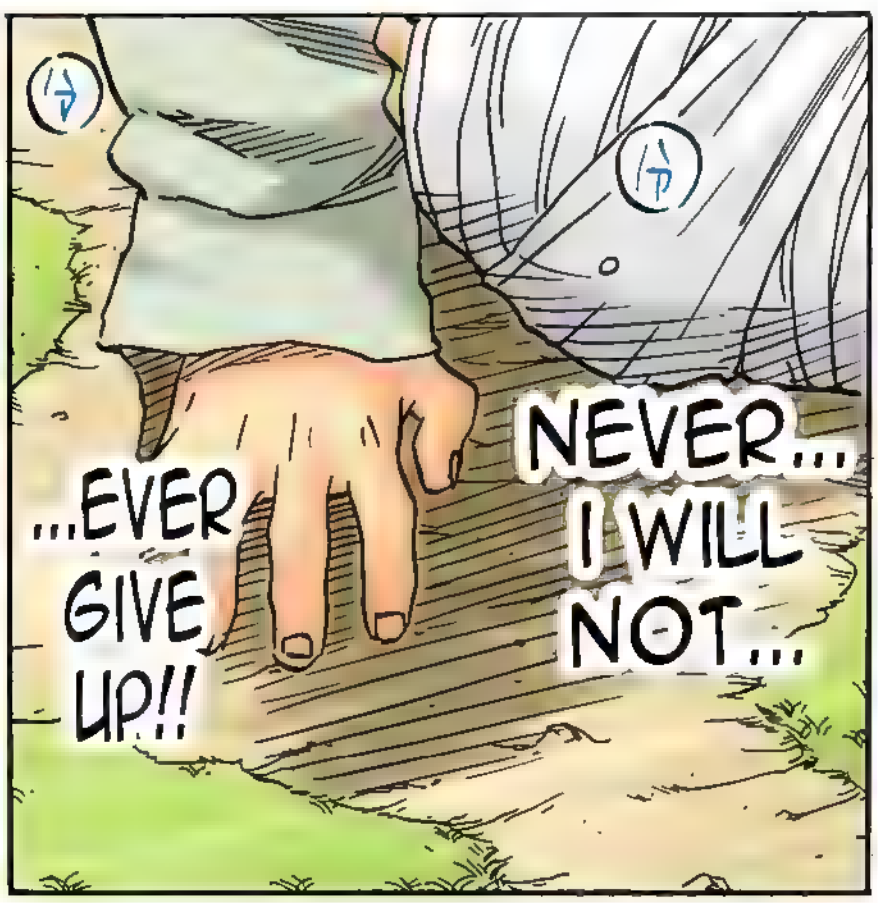

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LEE...

...THE BEST CHOICE IS CUT FLOWERS. WHICH ONES SHOULD I GET...?

IT'S BAD LUCK TO BUY A POTTED PLANT FOR SOMEONE WHO'S IN THE HOSPITAL*, SO...

HOW UNUSUAL, THAT YOU WOULD COME TO BUY OUR FLOWERS...

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS...

N...NOT REALLY...

*THIS IS BECAUSE THE WORD FOR "ROOTED" ("NETSUKU") IS PRONOUNCED THE SAME AS "BEDRIDDEN."

ズイ

UGH... INO, YOU WRETCHED PIGLET...

I'M GOING WITH YOU!

YOU'RE NOT GONNA GET A LEG UP ON ME!

ドキッ

AHA! YOU'RE GOING TO GO VISIT SASUKE, AREN'T YOU?!

MY CHOICE IS THE DAFFODIL...

HEH HEH... SO PREDICT-ABLE.

...TO SYMBO-LIZE **LOVE!**

I CHOOSE THIS ROSE...

I'LL IMBUE IT WITH MY HOPE THAT HE CAN LEAVE THE HOSPITAL AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE! ♥

...IT'S A HARDY FLOWER THAT SHOWS ITS BEAUTIFUL FACE EVEN IN THE DEAD OF WINTER..

...PATIENTLY WAITING FOR SPRING WITHOUT BOWING TO THE COLD.

NO... THE SECOND ONE IS FOR LEE!

I TOLD YOU I WASN'T GOING TO LOSE TO YOU!

WHAT ARE YOU NOW, SOME KIND OF FLOWER EXPERT?!

WHY? YOU ONLY NEED ONE--

ACTUALLY, I'M GOING TO GET TWO...

COLORED BY ANSAI.COM

HUH?

...WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

SAKURA... DID YOU HEAR WHAT THEY'VE BEEN SAYING ABOUT LEE?

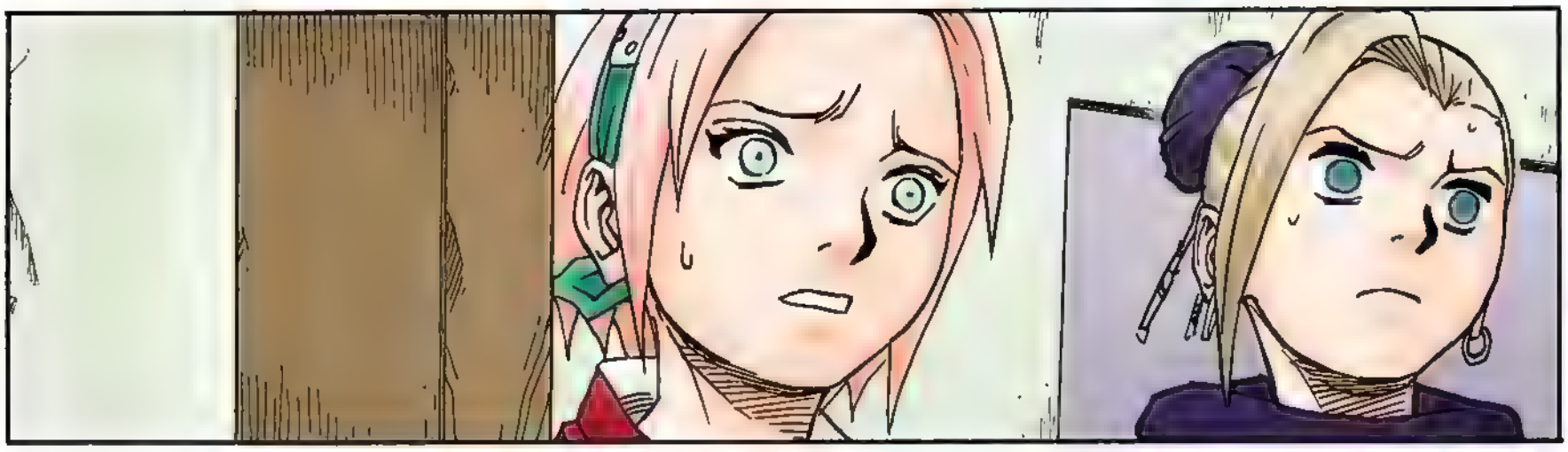
...OH! RIGHT...

.....

...LEE ...HIS INJURIES WERE SO SEVERE...

IT'S THAT...

...HE CAN NEVER BE A SHINOBI AGAIN...



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……199……

LEE!

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UNH...

LEE...!

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I'LL GO GET A STRETCHER, SO... PLEASE WATCH HIM!

YES, MA'AM...

...WHY DO BOYS...

.....

...HEY, INO...

.....!

.....

...ALWAYS PUSH THEMSELVES TOO FAR...?

SORRY...

HOW WOULD I KNOW...?

I'M A GIRL, TOO, YOU KNOW...

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HUH ?

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I WONDER.. WHO...?

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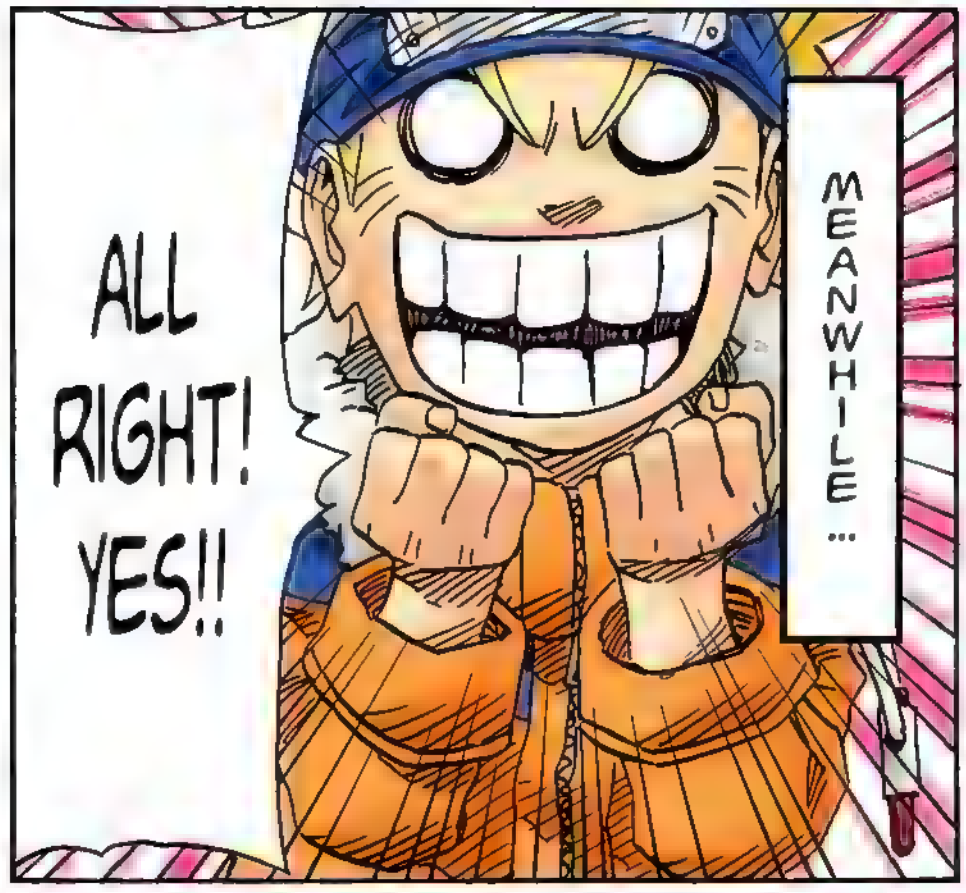

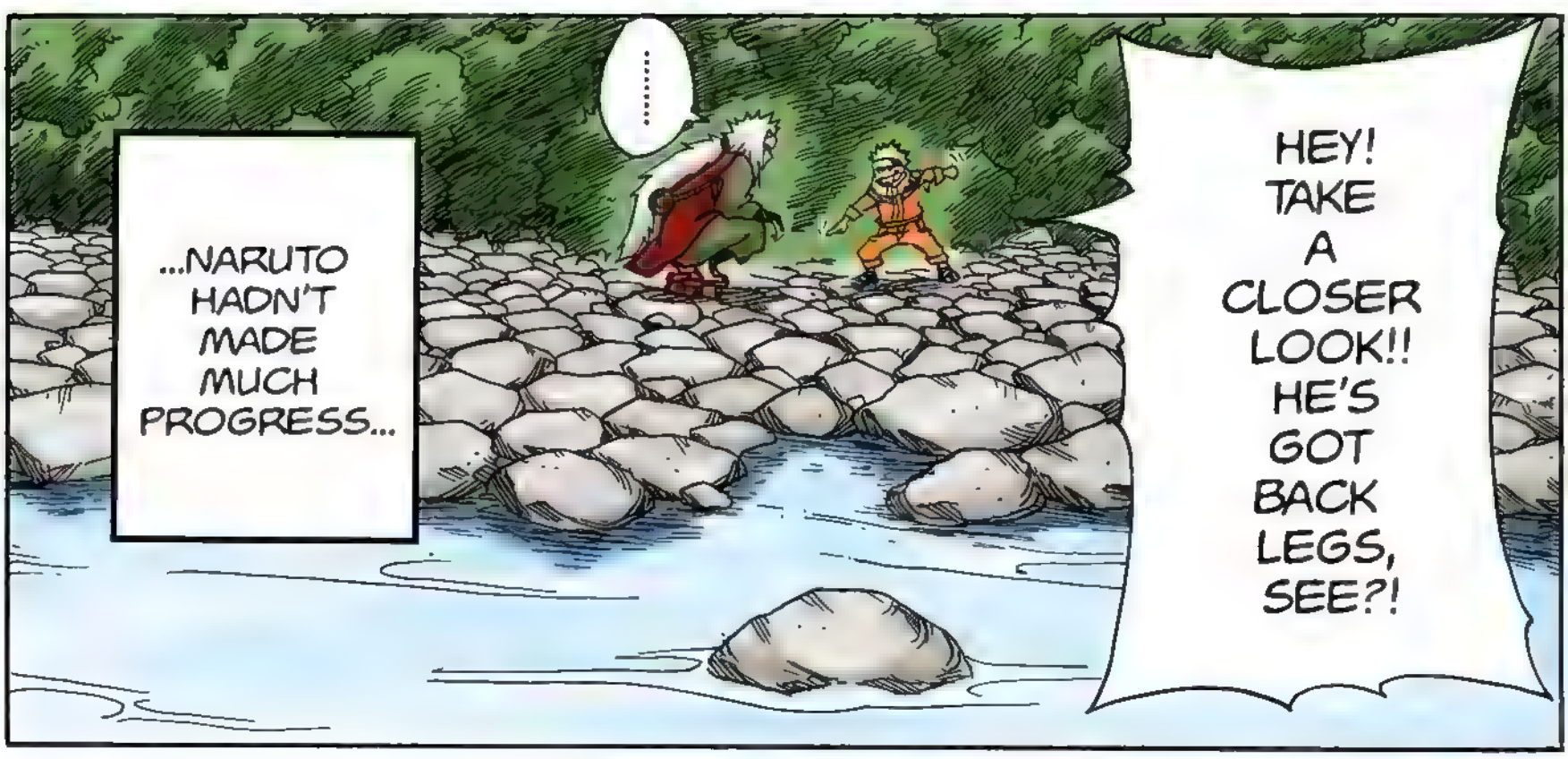

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94 : THE KEY!!

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KUCHIYOSE NO JUTSU! THE ART OF SUMMONING!

THREE WEEKS SINCE THE START OF TRAINING...

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WHEE!

WAHH!

ボフン

...IT'S GOTTA BE A FROG THIS TIME!

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AH HA HA!

...BETWEEN A FROG AND A TADPOLE ANYWAY?!

WHAT IS THE DIFFER-ENCE...

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.....

COULD YOU BE A LITTLE MORE SUPPORTIVE?!

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HA HA HA!

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OH...

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...HE'S BEEN SLOGGING THROUGH PRETTY MUCH ON WILLPOWER ALONE.

...I SUPPOSE IT'S TO BE EXPECTED FOR THE LAST 21 DAYS...

SIGH...

油

HE COLLA-PSED AGAIN..?

...THE CHAKRA OF THE NINE-TAILED FOX... WHEN-EVER HE WANTS.

カッ

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IT'S NO EASY TASK, DEVELOPING THE ABILITY TO ACCESS AND CONTROL...

I IMAGINE NARUTO'S BODY NORMALLY SUPPRESSES THE FOX SPIRIT'S POWER TO AVOID STRAIN.

AND THERE'S NO DOUBT THAT HIS BODY IS TOO SMALL TO COMPLETELY CONTAIN THE MONSTER'S CHAKRA...

...IS A SUDDEN EMOTIONAL RUSH OR PHYSICAL DAMAGE TO NARUTO'S FLESH...

SO IF THE KEY TO DRAWING OUT THE FOX'S CHAKRA...

.....

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FORGIVE ME FOURTH HOKAGE...!

THEN I'LL JUST HAVE TO TEACH HIM HOW TO USE THAT KEY... THE HARD WAY!

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LORD HOKAGE?

YOU'RE RUING THE FACT THAT YOU RETURNED FROM THE FOREST OF DEATH ALIVE, NO...?

I'M SO SORRY, I...

.....

...ANKO...?

YOU AND OROCHIMARU NO LONGER SHARE ANY RELATIONSHIP. YOU OWE US NOTHING...

...DON'T.

.....

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.....

I SUSPECT THAT NOT EVEN I COULD FACE HIM.

BESIDES, NONE OF THE SHINOBI IN KONOHA RIGHT NOW...

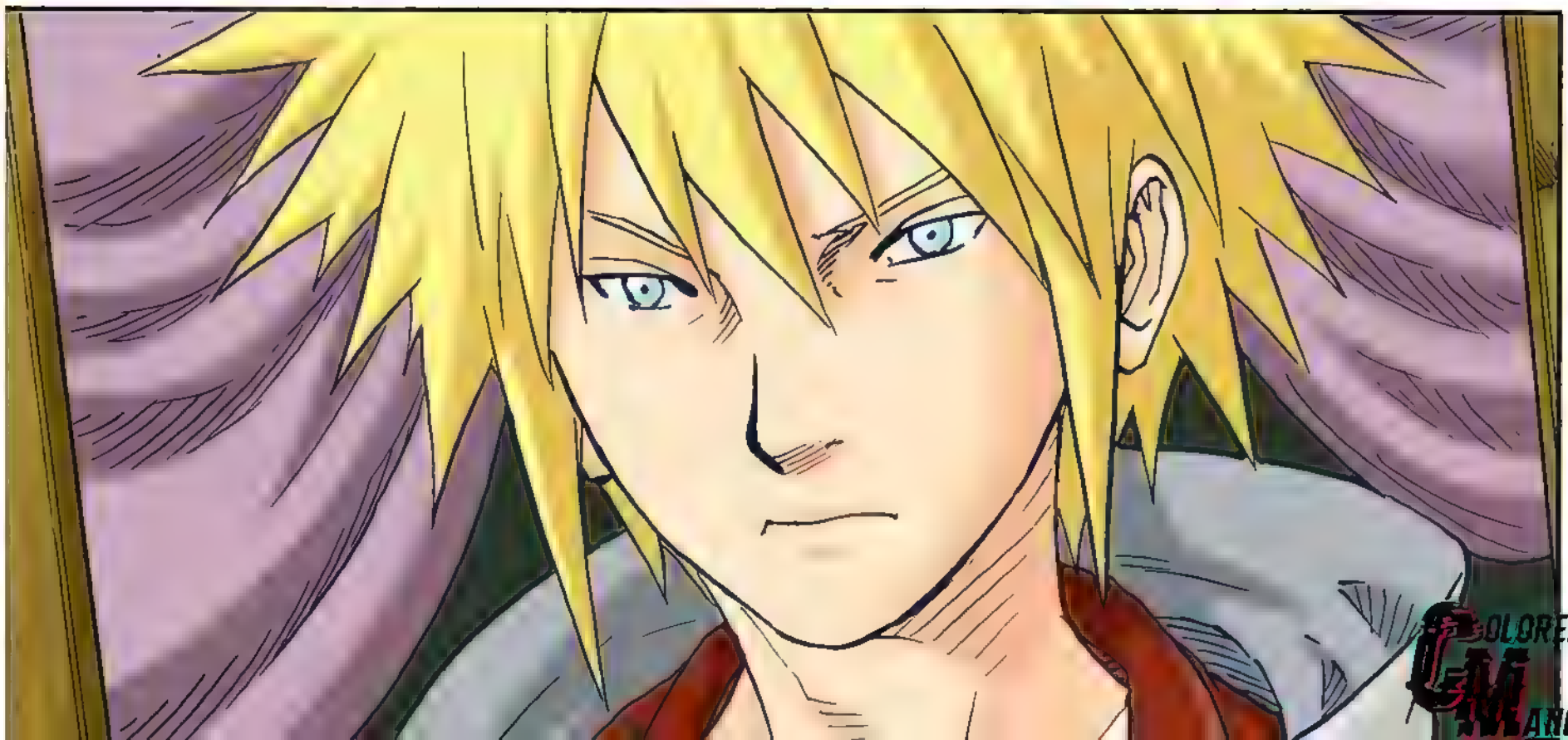
...ARE ANY THREAT TO HIM.

THAT WAS 13 YEARS AGO.

DO NOT SAY SUCH THINGS.

HE SACRIFICED HIS LIFE TO SAVE THIS VILLAGE.

IF ONLY THE FOURTH HOKAGE WERE STILL ALIVE...



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...SO WE MUST DO WHAT WE CAN... WITH WHAT WE HAVE.

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...HE IS NO LONGER WITH US...

YOU MUST NOT BLAME YOURSELF.

I'M GOING TO GET SOME FRESH AIR...

...YES, SIR.

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.....!

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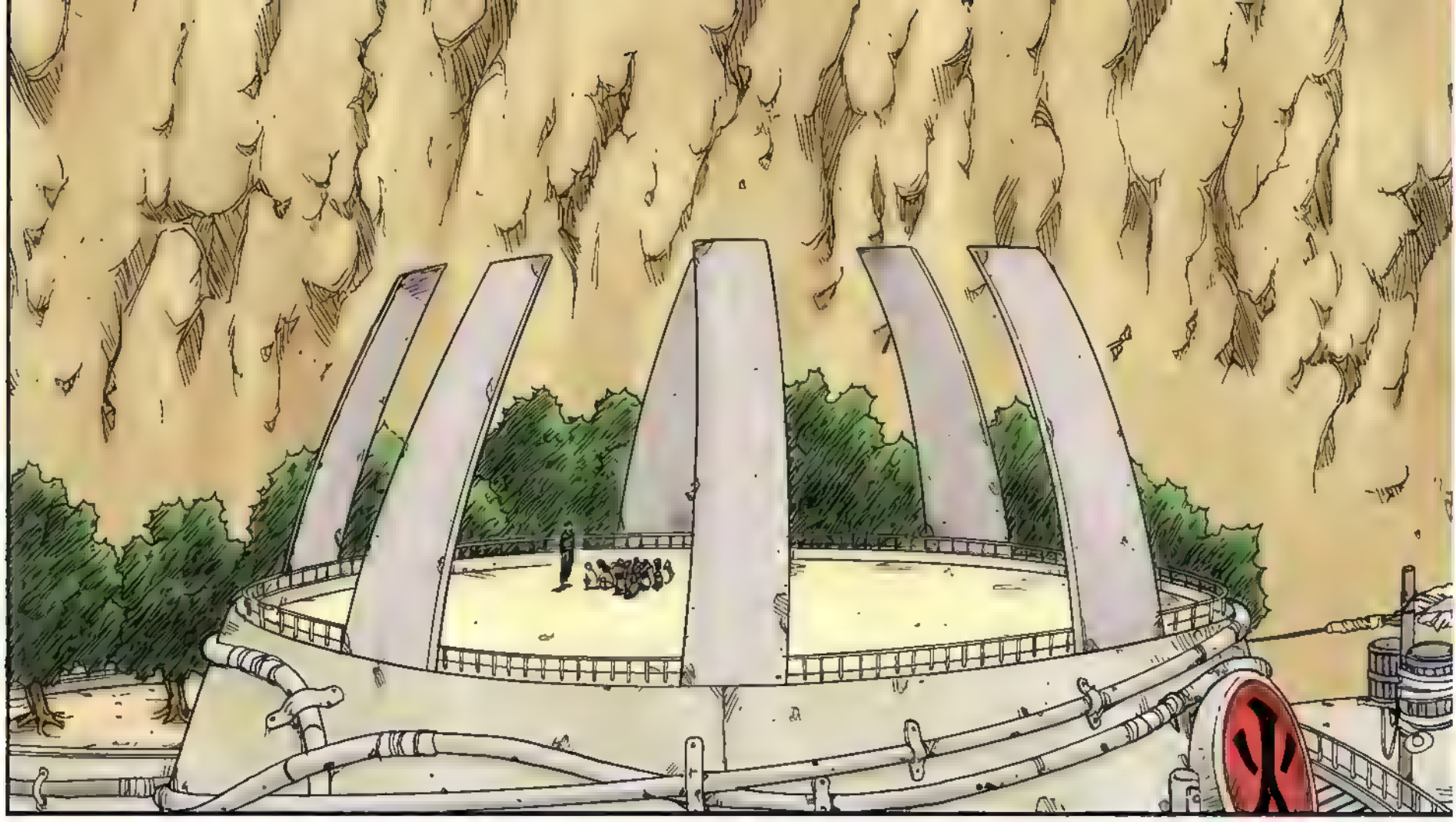


FROM LEFT TO RIGHT IN ORDER ARE THE FIRST, SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH--

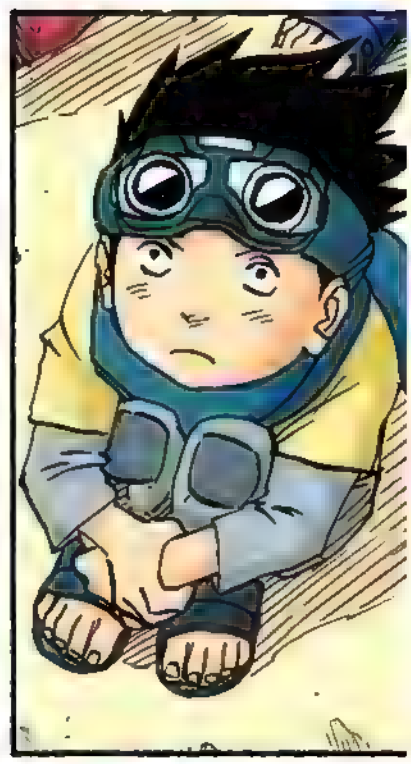
AS YOU ALL KNOW, THESE STONE IMAGES DEPICT THE FACES OF ALL THE PAST AND PRESENT HOKAGE.

TODAY, WE'LL HAVE OUR HISTORY LESSON OUTSIDE!

THE OLD GEEZER LOOKS SO DIFERENT NOWA-DAYS...

UP THERE ON THE MOUNTAIN, HE STILL HAS ALL HIS HAIR!

TEE HEE...



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...THE FIFTH HOKAGE...

HMM...

HA HA..

...NO ONE'S BEEN SELECTED YET, BUT... MAYBE IT'LL BE ME!

MASTER IRUKA!

WHO'S THE FIFTH?

EXCELLENT LECTURE, IRUKA!

AHA, YES! IT'S GOOD TO INDULGE IN THE OCCASIONAL JOKE...

I JUST FELT LIKE PAYING THE MONUMENT A VISIT, THAT'S ALL.

HEY! GRAMPS, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, HUH?

OH! IT'S THE THIRD HOKAGE!

...L-LORD HOKAGE...!

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...THE THIRD LORD HOKAGE!

THIS IS THE VERY PERSON WHOSE FACE IS ABOVE YOU, THIRD FROM THE LEFT...

ALL RIGHT.

YOU'VE COME AT A PERFECT TIME, SIR.

PLEASE, OVER HERE...

...AND IT'S SAID THAT HE POSSESSED SUPERLATIVE STRENGTH, EVEN COMPARED TO THE OTHER HOKAGE!

THE THIRD HOKAGE WAS A GENIUS WHO WAS NICKNAMED "THE PROFESSOR"...

YEP! YOU GOT THAT RIGHT!

YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE IT!

WHAT?! ARE YOU REALLY THAT STRONG, OLD MAN?!

IRUKA! WHY ARE YOU USING THE PAST TENSE?!

AH! S...SORRY.

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'CAUSE I'M SUPER-STRONG AND SUPER-COOL!

ALL RIGHT! THEN I'M GONNA BE THE FIFTH HOKAGE!

...YOU'VE GOT TO BE THE STRONG-EST SHINOBI IN THIS VILLAGE!

H...HEY! ALL OF YOU KNOW THAT TO BE GRANTED THE TITLE OF HOKAGE...

HO HO...! NOT WITH **YOUR** GRADES!

A FUTURE HOKAGE COULD VERY WELL EMERGE FROM THIS GROUP!

HA HA HA... SUCH PROMISE! UNLIKE ME, ALL OF YOU ARE SO...

...YOUNG!

.....

.....

YOU NEED NOT CHOOSE AN IMPOSSIBLE PATH. YOU MAY LIVE AS YOU LIKE, DIE AS YOU LIKE...

JUST...

YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE!

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THOSE WHO ARE PRECIOUS TO US?

...NO MATTER WHAT PATH YOU CHOOSE...

THE PEOPLE WHO OCCUPY A SPECIAL PLACE IN YOUR HEARTS... WHOM YOU TRUST... AND LOVE.

IS THERE ANYONE LIKE THAT IN YOUR LIFE?

...NEVER FORGET TO PROTECT THOSE WHO ARE PRECIOUS TO YOU!

HEH HEH... ME TOO!

FOR ME, IT WOULD PROBABLY BE MY FRIENDS!

OH, AND... MY DOG, GONTA...

Y...YEAH... MY DAD AND MOM. AND... I HATE HIM JUST A LITTLE BIT, BUT... MY BIG BROTHER TOO.

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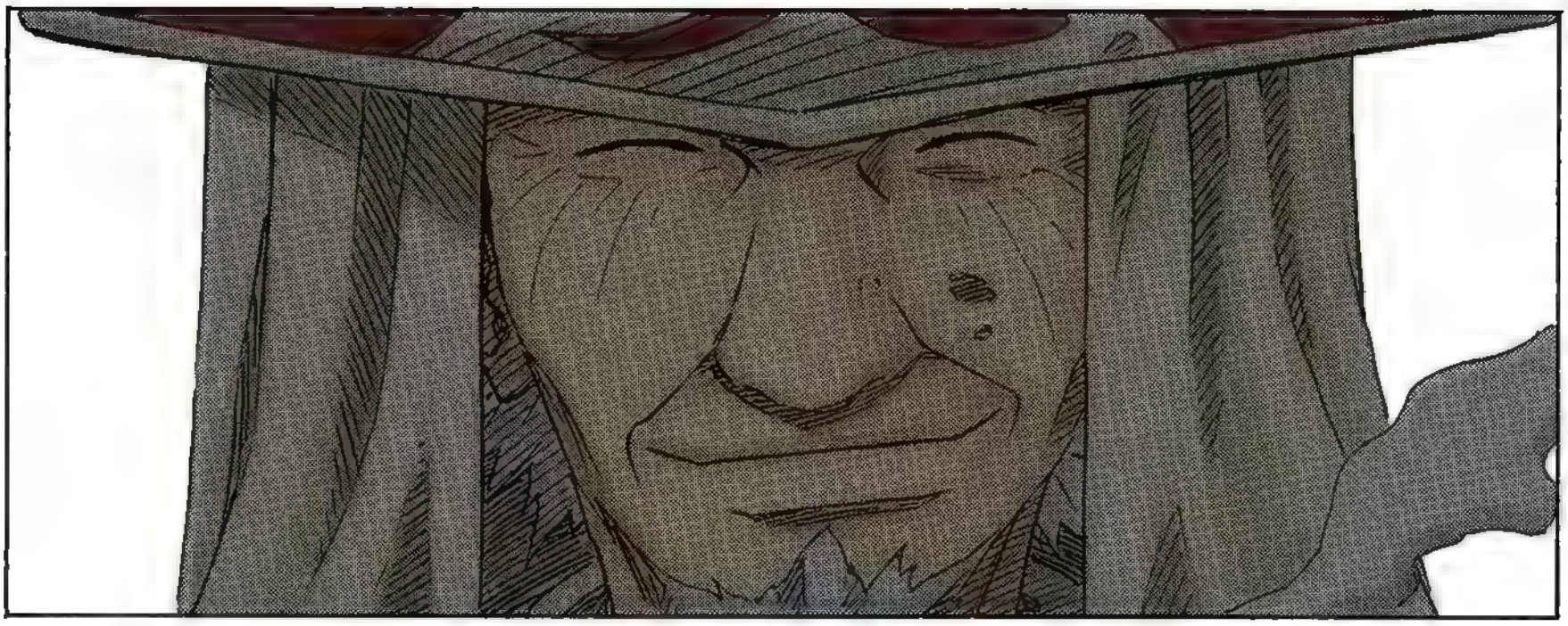

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AND EVERY SINGLE ONE OF YOU... EVERYONE IN THIS VILLAGE!

... FOR YOU, LONG AGO

JUST AS IT WAS ...

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...?

YOUR TRAINING ENDS TODAY. IF YOU VALUE YOUR LIFE, YOU'VE GOT TO FIGURE THINGS OUT FOR YOURSELF! OKAY...?

WH... WHAT IS IT...?!

カッ!!

HUH? WHERE AM I...?

GET UP!

!?

ガサッ

HUH?

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95 : A CHANCE ENCOUNTER!!

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AAAAAH!!

AAAAAH!

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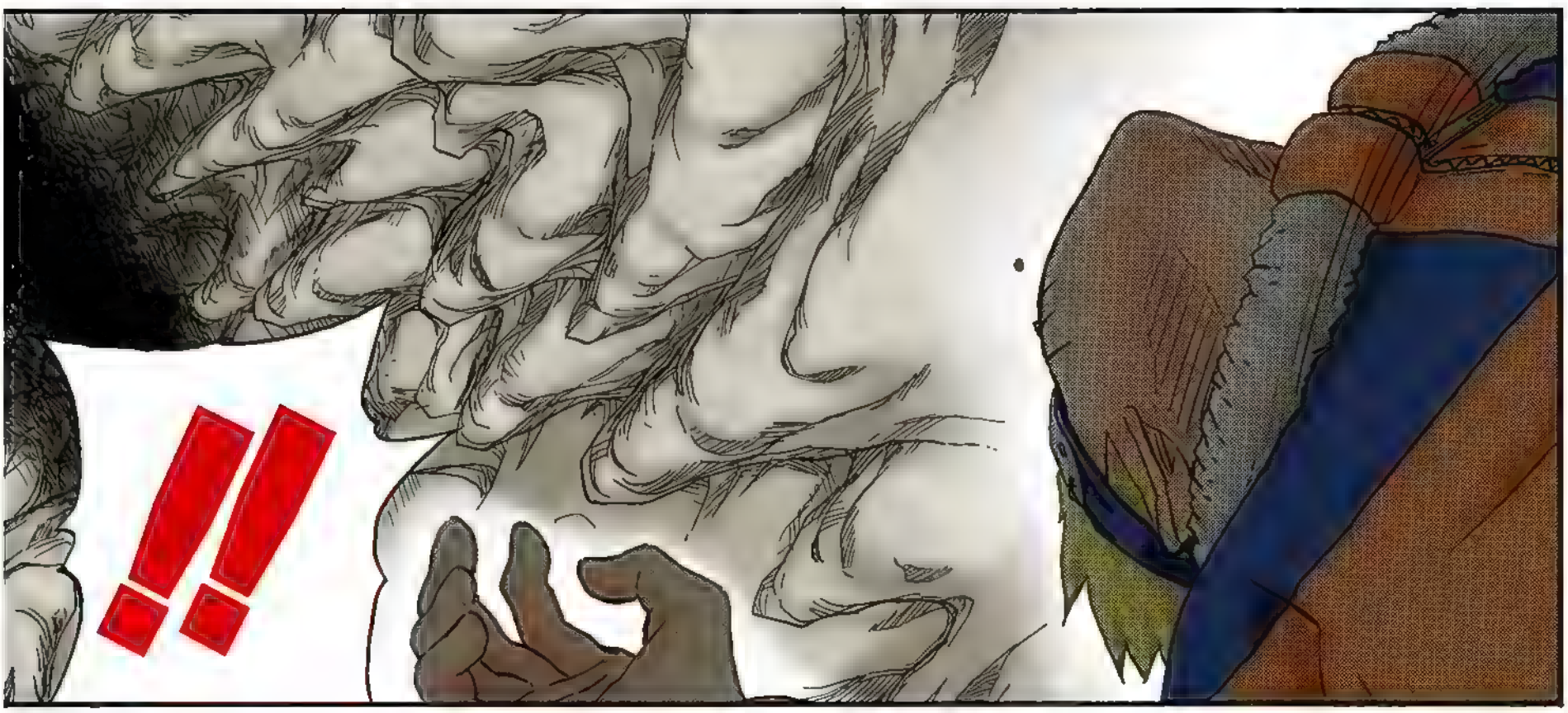

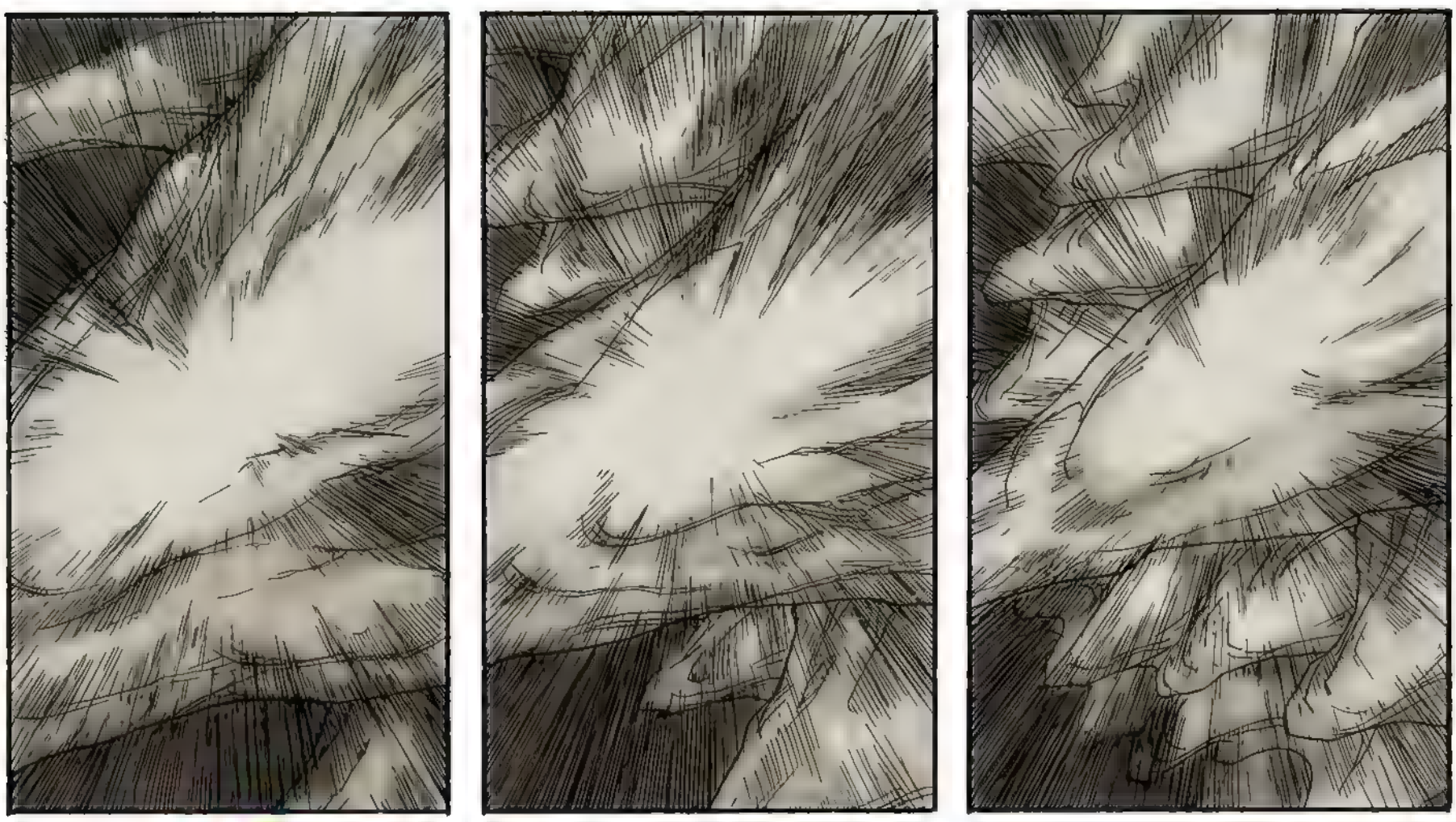

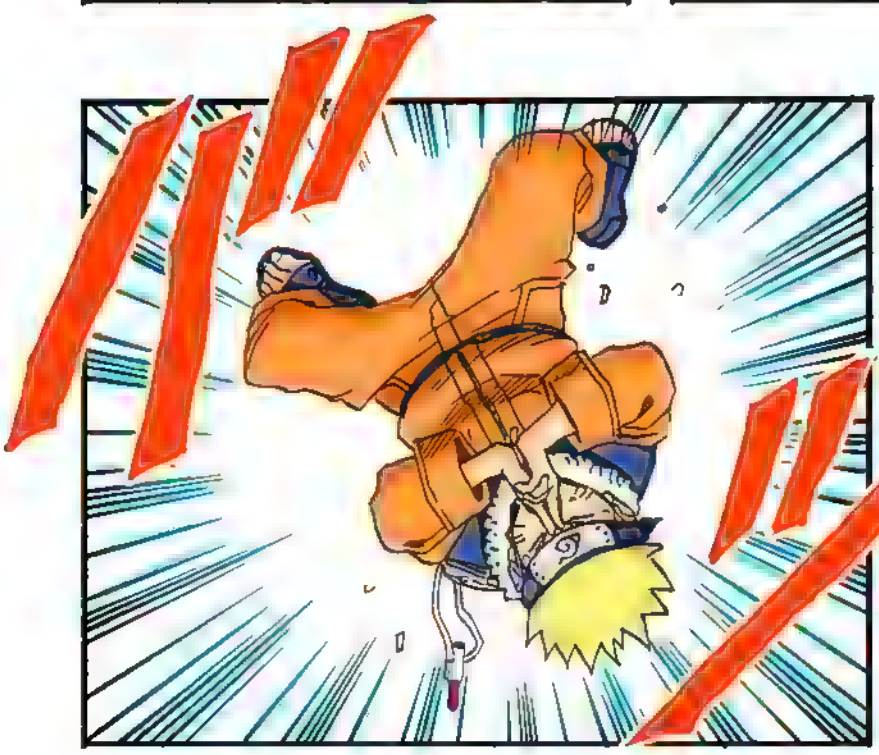

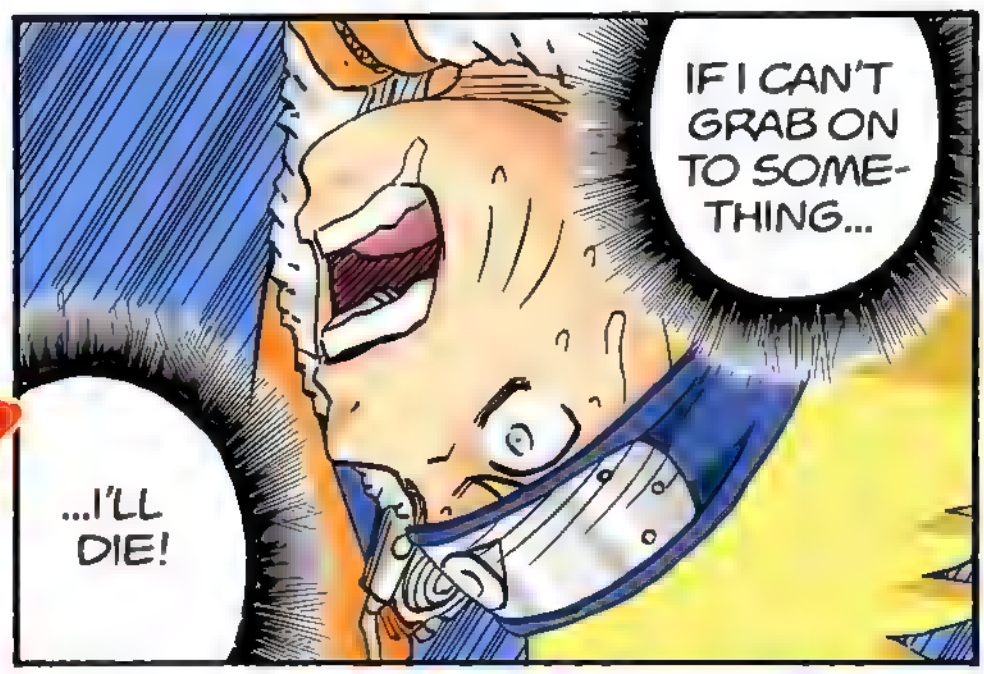

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NOW!

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WAAH!

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FANSA.COM

THIS TIME, YOU NEED TO TURN THE KEY...

...AND OPEN THAT DOOR YOUR-SELF!

AND WITH YOUR POOR CHAKRA CONTROL... AT THE SPEED YOU'RE FALLING, THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN CLING TO THE CRAGS...

IT'S USELESS. THE WALLS OF THIS GORGE HAVE BEEN POLISHED SMOOTH BY THE CASCADING WATERS.

...IS TO DRAW ON THE NINE-TAILED FOX'S CHAKRA.

NARUTO YOUR ONLY HOPE NOW...

I'M REALLY GONNA DIE...!!

AT THIS RATE...

DIE...

ドクン

GONNA DIE...

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HALF A DAY EARLIER, IN THE LAND OF WIND...

...IN THE VILLAGE OF SUNA-GAKURE ...

...GOOD JOB, BAKI.

YOU HAVE DONE WELL...

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ALL THREE HAVE SAFELY ADVANCED...

...AS WE INTENDED... TO THE FINAL ROUNDS.

HERE IS THEIR PLAN OF ATTACK, SIR.

HOW IS THE PACT WITH THE SOUND VILLAGE COMING...?

...NOW... IT TRULY BEGINS...

.....

...WELL THEN, I LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR WORK ON THE DECISIVE DAY.

COLORED MANGA.COM

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THE KONOHA NINJA ARE NO FOOLS.

THEIR BLACK OPS TEAMS ARE PATROLLING ALL OVER.

IF THEY NOTICE ANY TROOP MOVEMENT, OUR INTENTIONS WILL BE TRANSPARENT TO THEM.

...COULD WE NOT DISPATCH TROOPS TO THE BORDER WITH THE LAND OF FIRE* UNDER THE GUISE OF DRILLS?

...HOWEVER, LORD KAZEKAGE...

⋮

SINCE THERE ARE JUST FOUR OF US, INCLUDING MYSELF...

*LAND OF FIRE: THE NATION WHERE THE VILLAGE OF KONOHAGAKURE IS LOCATED.

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...AS EXPECTED, THE MILITARY PRESENCE BEING ALLOWED INTO KONOHAGAKURE HAS BEEN SEVERELY RESTRICTED.

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AS YOU WISH.

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...GO...

NOW THEN...

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...THAT IS PRECISELY WHY WE SENT GAARA AND THE OTHERS.

.....

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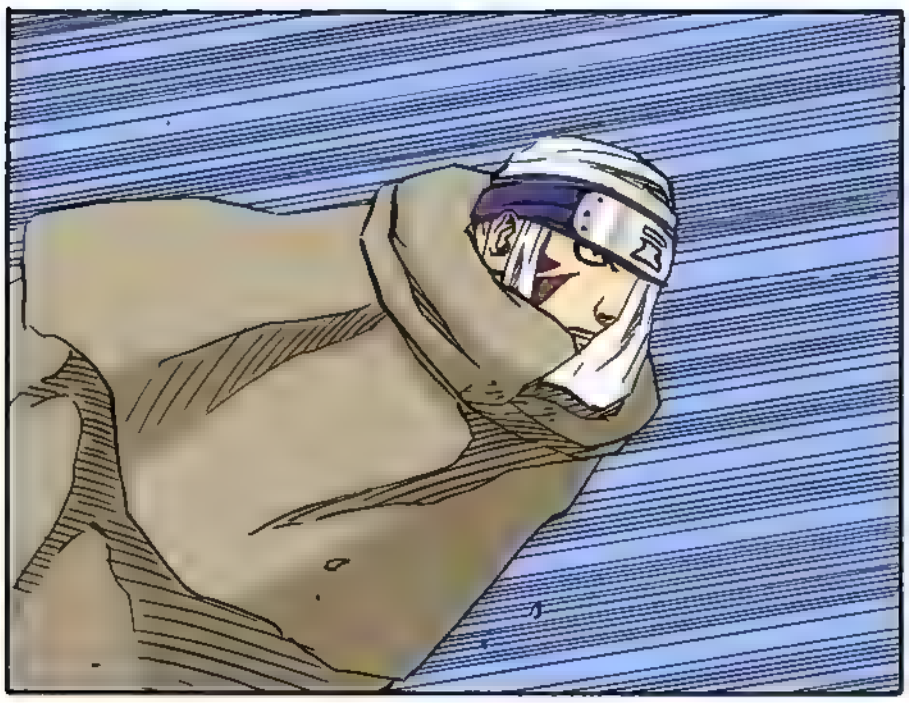
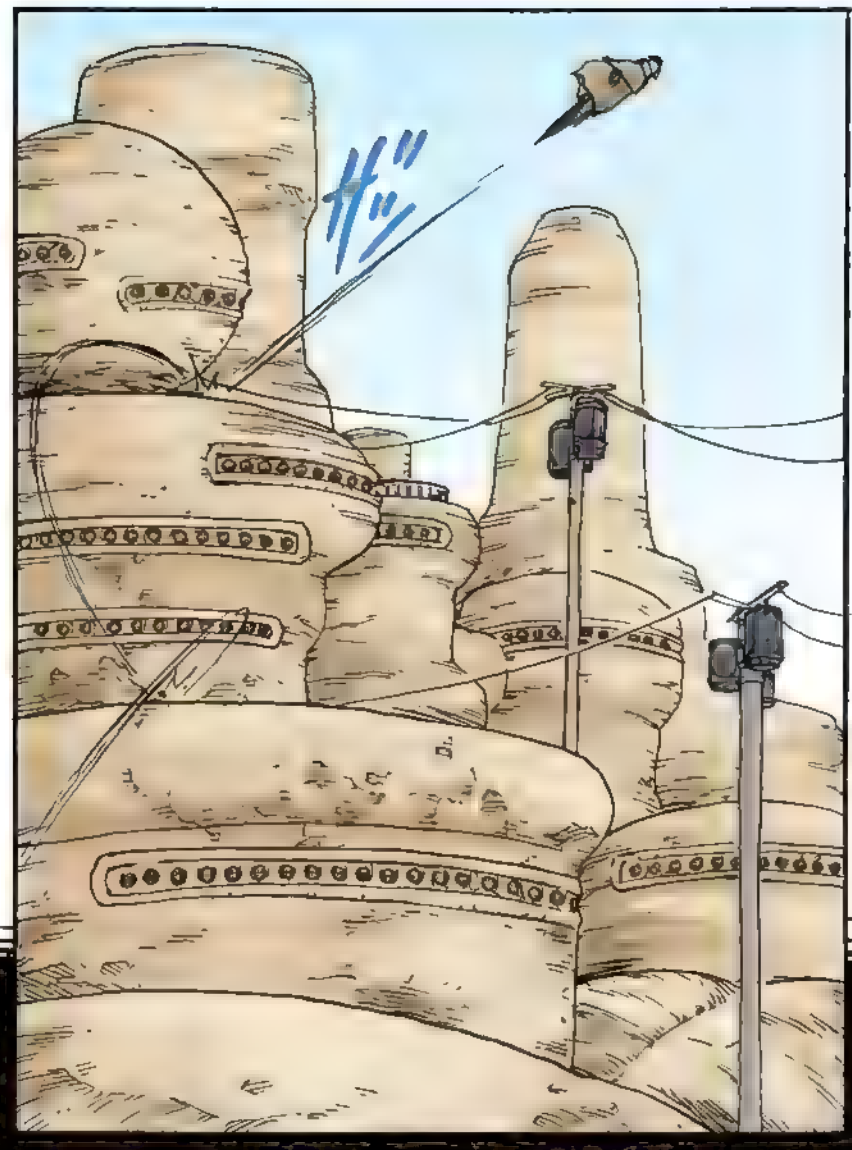
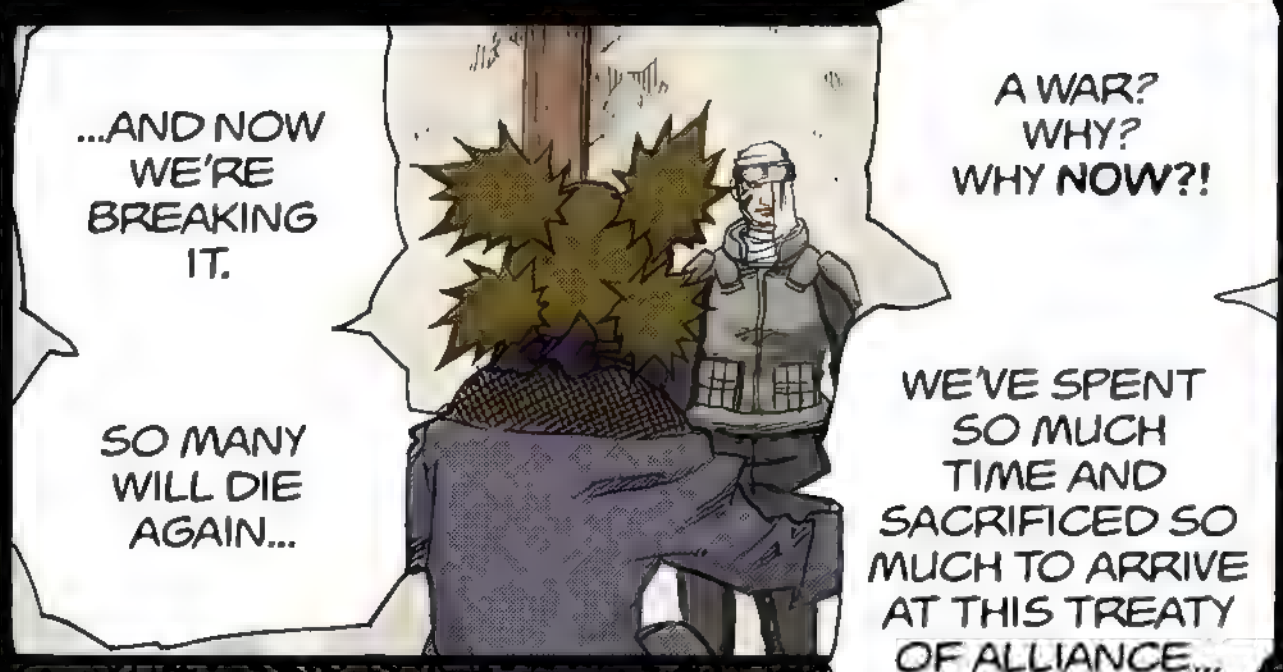
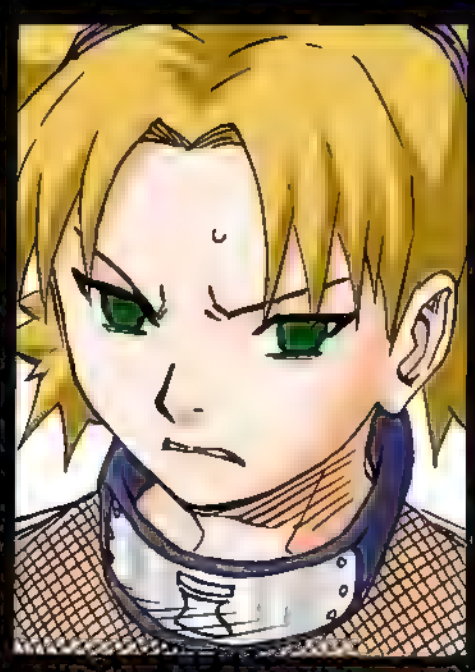




ALL IS AS LORD KAZEKAGE WILLS IT.

THIS IS AN A+ RANKED MISSION... REMEMBER THAT.
WE SAND SHALL JOIN WITH SOUND...
...AND THIS WILL PROBABLY END IN WAR AGAINST KONOHA.


...AND NOW WE'RE BREAKING IT.
SO MANY WILL DIE AGAIN...
A WAR? WHY? WHY **NOW**?!
WE'VE SPENT SO MUCH TIME AND SACRIFICED SO MUCH TO ARRIVE AT THIS TREATY OF ALLIANCE...



THE TREATY OF ALLIANCE ITSELF IS A THREAT TO OUR VERY EXISTENCE.

SHINOBI ARE FUNDAMENTALLY INSTRUMENTS OF CONFLICT.

...TO FORCE MILITARY CUTBACKS ON OUR VILLAGE OF SUNAGAKURE.

...THAT IDIOT DAIMYO OF THE LAND OF WIND USED THE TREATY AS HIS OPPORTUNITY...

YOU GENIN MAY NOT KNOW THE DETAILS, BUT...

WHEN THE HEAD IS A FOOL, IT IS WE, THE HANDS AND FEET, WHO SUFFER.

...OUR VILLAGE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO RAISE THE QUALITY OF EACH SHINOBI.

IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN ITS MILITARY STRENGTH...

THE ALLIANCE CAUSED THE WIND DAIMYO TO PUT HIS TRUST IN KONOHA AND FORWARD REQUESTS TO THEM THAT HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN SENDING TO US...

...FURTHER SLASHING THE FLOW OF FUNDS TO HIS OWN NATION'S SHINOBI VILLAGE...

... CLAIMING THAT HIS SCHEME WAS CHEAPER.

.....

...GAARA.

THAT IS WHY SHINOBI LIKE YOU WERE "MANUFACTURED"...

RIGHT NOW, THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THE LAND OF WIND IS IN PERIL.

...DECIDED TO JOIN FORCES WITH OTOGAKURE TO SHOW OUR IDIOT DAIMYO THE NAIVETÉ OF HIS POLICIES...

LORD KAZEKAGE, WHO SENSED THE IMPENDING CRISIS OF SUNAGAKURE'S MILITARY DECLINE...

...ALL THE MILITARY STRENGTH OF SAND WILL BE UTTERLY DRAINED, AND OUR CAPABILITY TO FIGHT KONOHA TOTALLY LOST.

IF WE WAIT ANY LONGER...

...AND, AT THE SAME TIME, TO CRUSH KONOHA AND RESTORE THE SAND VILLAGE TO PROSPERITY.

GAARA, THIS MISSION... ITS SUCCESS DEPENDS HEAVILY ON YOU...

.....

I KNOW.

COLORED BY NARUTOFANGA.COM

HUH?!

!

IT'S THAT CHAKRA ...

THIS FEEL-ING...

ハシャバシャ

!!

!

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COLORED MANGA.COM

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!

I-IT'S HUGE...! WHAT IS IT?!

UGH!

!!

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KID, COME HERE...

...CLOSER.

COLORED MANGA.COM

WAAAH!

...THE NINE-TAILED FOX...!

...Y... YOU'RE...

.....

I WANT TO DEVOUR YOU, BUT THIS GATE... IT'S SEALED SOMEHOW...

IT WON'T OPEN... HOW VEXING...

WHAT DO YOU WANT?!

WHY HAVE YOU COME HERE?

...IT WAS **HIS** CHAKRA.

NOW I GET IT... THE RED CHAKRA...

COLORED MANGA.COM

HEY, STUPID FOX! I'VE BEEN LETTING YOU LIVE IN MY BODY ALL THIS TIME, SO...

WHY DON'T YOU PAY ME SOME RENT AND LEND ME YOUR CHAKRA?!

!

UH?

.....

!

YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE!

IT'S TRUE THAT IF YOU DIE, I WILL DIE, TOO, BUT THE FACT THAT YOU'D DARE TO THREATEN ME...

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!

COLORED MANGA.COM

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!

VERY WELL... I'LL REWARD YOUR COURAGE... HERE YOU GO!

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WAAH !!

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THIS IS IT... THAT FEELING!

カッ!!

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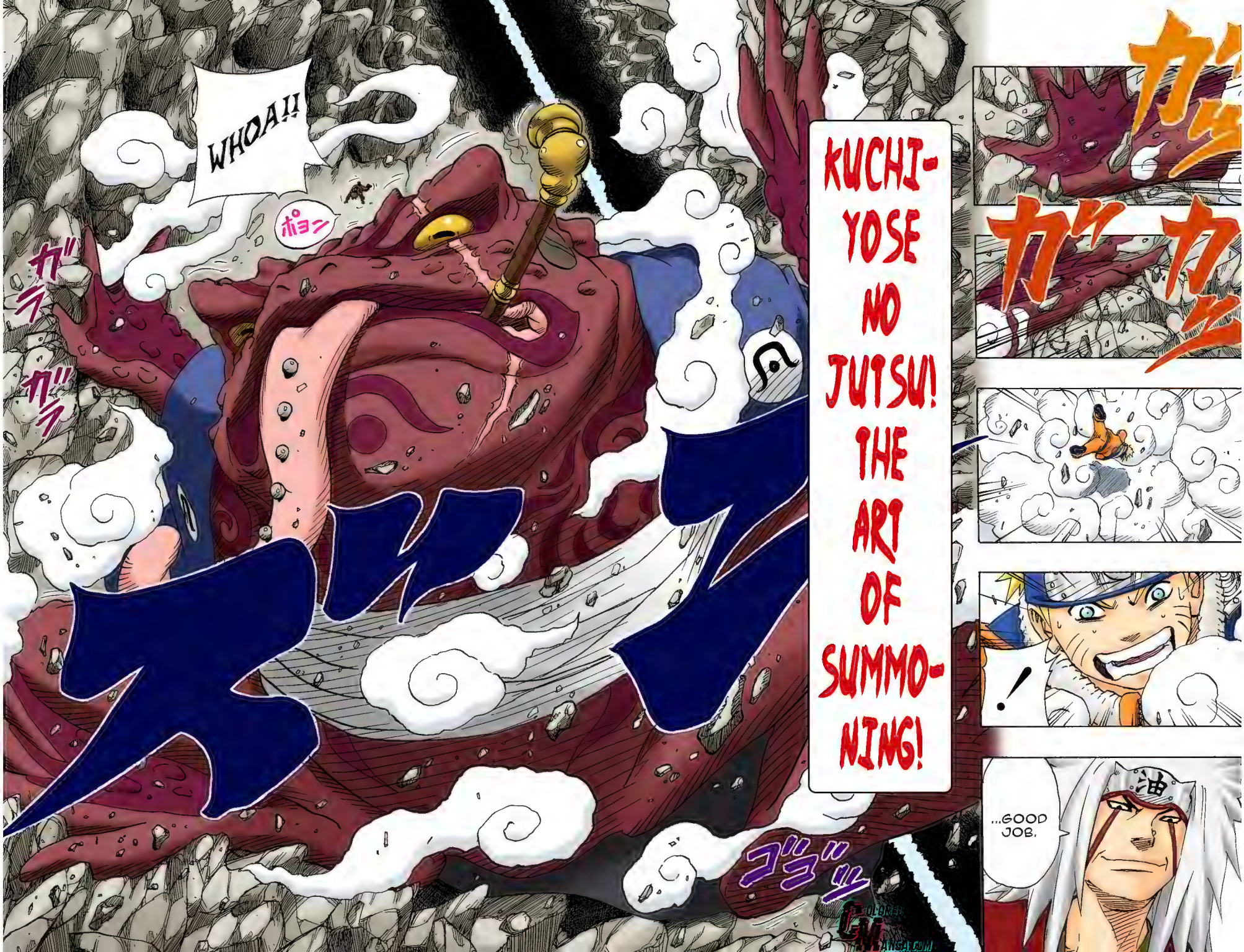
WHOA!!
ポヨン
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KUCHI-
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THE
ART
OF
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...GOOD
JOB.

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96：

THE UNEXPECTED VISITOR!!

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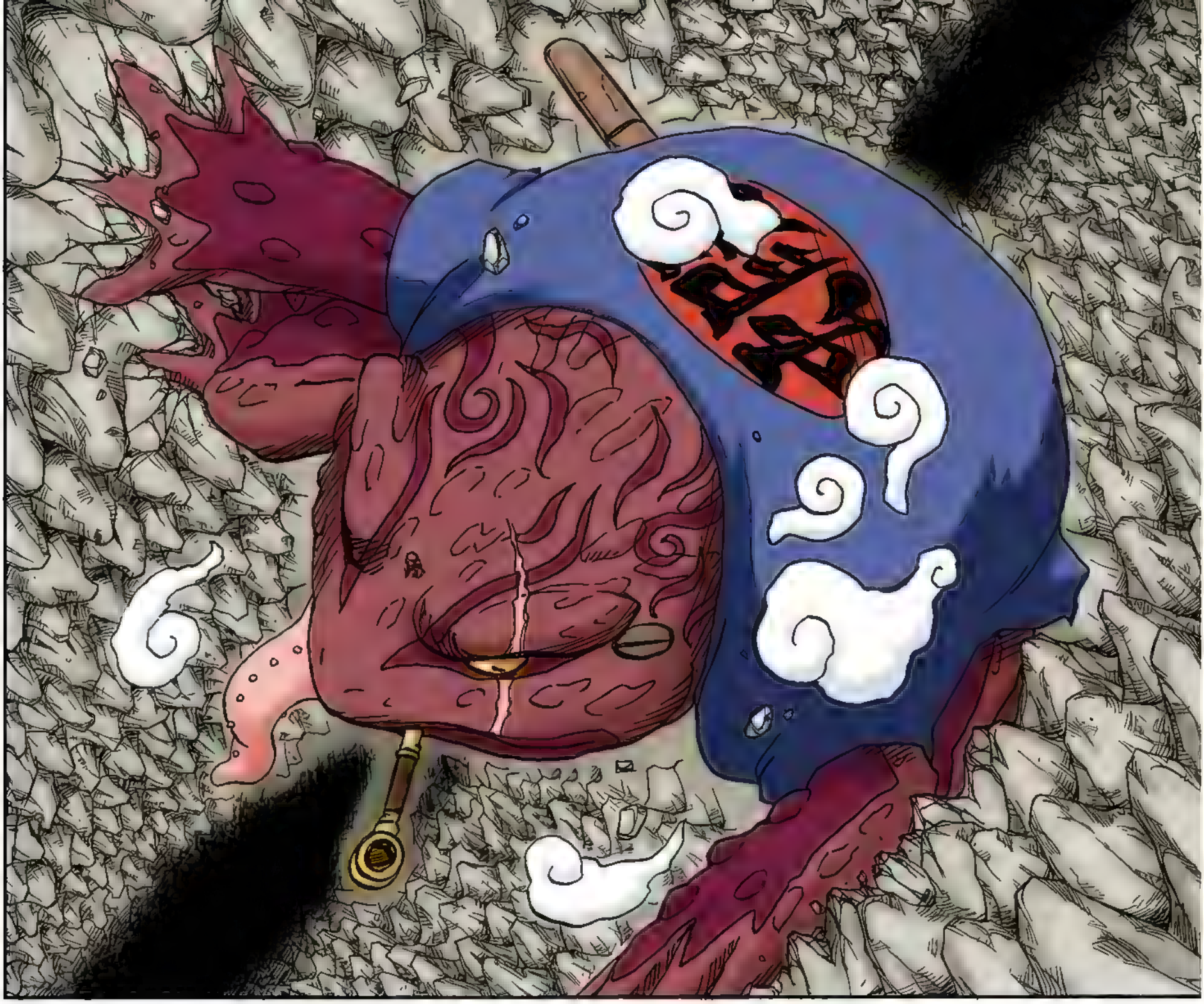

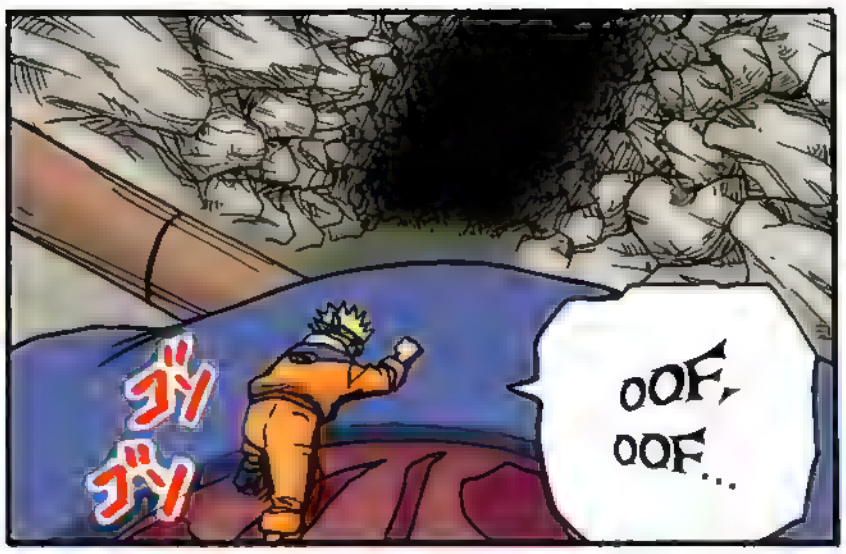

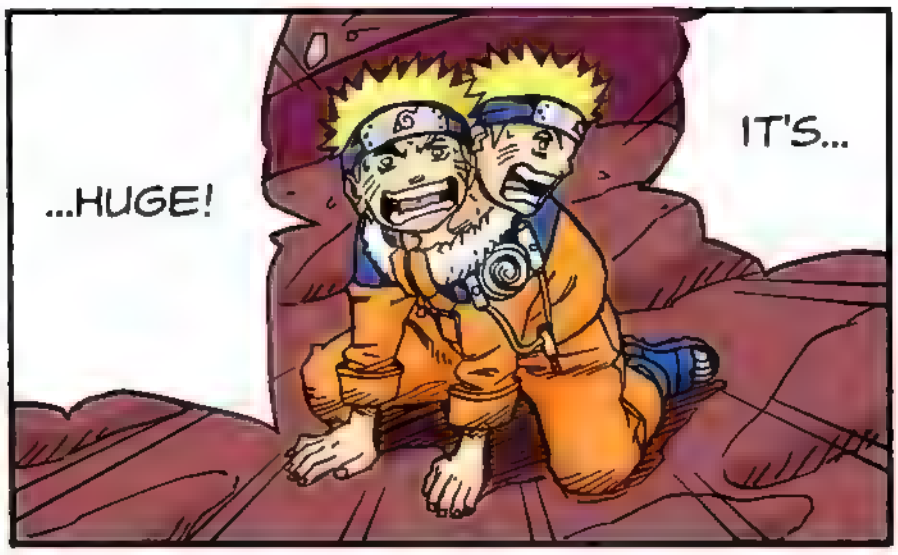

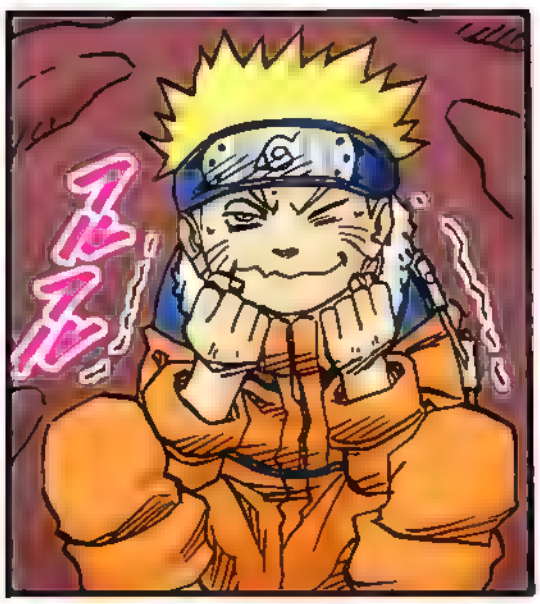

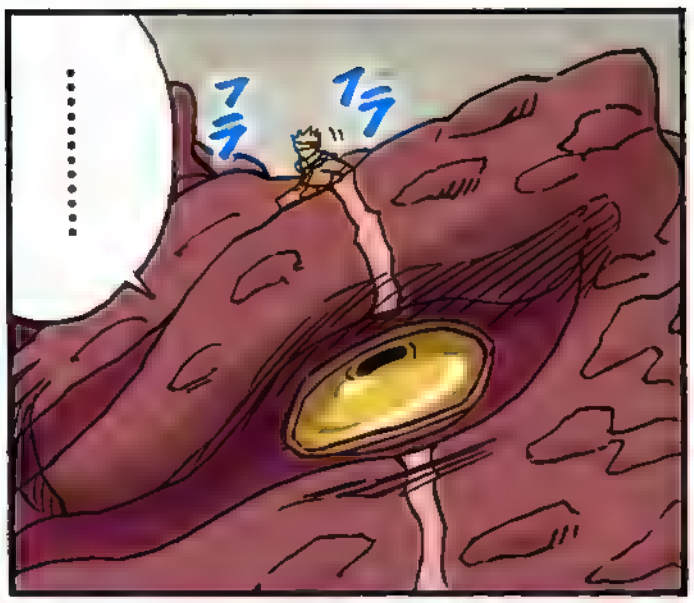

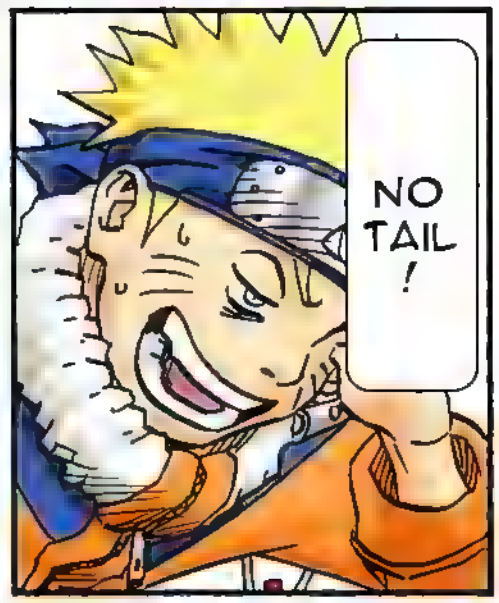

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...TO DRAW OUT THE NINE-TAILED FOX'S CHAKRA THROUGH HIS OWN WILL.

IT SEEMS HE DID MANAGE...

YES! I DID IT!! I MASTERED THE ART OF SUMMONING!

....HIS CONTROL OF IT IS STILL FAR FROM STABLE.

ALTHOUGH...

TO HAVE SUMMONED HIM, OF ALL THINGS...!

HE CALLED UP AND USED TOO MUCH CHAKRA.

WHEE!

...EVEN I CAN'T HANDLE HIM!

I MEAN, GAMA BUNTA...

COLORED MANGA.COM

WHY ARE YOU RUNNING AROUND SCREAMING ON TOP OF MY HEAD, IDIOT?!

!

HEY, URCHIN!

EH?!

I'M TRYING TO ENJOY MY FIRST BREATH OF FRESH AIR IN A LONG TIME, HERE...

WH-WHAT THE...?

...?!

...AND PUTTING A WEIRD BRAT ON TOP OF MY HEAD, TOO!

THAT LECHEROUS LOUT, SUMMONING ME TO SUCH AN AWFUL PLACE...

H...HE'S SCARY! WHY DOES SOME-THING LIKE HIM HAVE TO POP OUT?!

JIRAIYA?

WHO?

HEY! YOU SCAMP! WHERE'S JIRAIYA?!

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...YOU?

.....!

I NEEDED SOMEONE TO UH... RESCUE ME...

...I'M THE ONE WHO SUMMONED YOU.

ACTU-ALLY ...

Y...YEAH!

THERE'S NO WAY A WEE LITTLE MIDGET LIKE YOU COULD HAVE SUMMONED THE LIKES OF ME!

HA HA HA HA...

YOU OUGHTN'T LIE, SCAMP!

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA! HA HA HA!

キッ

MANGA.COM

YOU STUPID FROG! I'VE BEEN TRYING TO ACT HUMBLE, AND YOU KEEP BLABBERING AND INSULTING ME!

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...I'M YOUR MASTER, RIGHT?! STUPID FROG!

I MEAN, SINCE IT WAS ME WHO SUMMONED YOU...

...!

UNH...

HOW DARE A STRIPLING WHO CAN'T EVEN LEGALLY EXCHANGE SAKÉ CUPS DECLARE HIMSELF THE MASTER OF **ME**, LORD GAMA BUNTA, THE CHIEF TOAD?!

...WHAT...? YOU... WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE TALKING TO?!

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WAAH!

DO YOU WANT ME TO KILL YOU?!

WELL... SURRENDER, AND SHOW SOME RESPECT!

THEN I JUST MIGHT MAKE YOU MY HENCHMAN... BE GRATEFUL!

H-HE IS SERIOUSLY SCARY! THAT PERVY SAGE... HE SHOULD HAVE WARNED ME!!

I...I'M SO SORRY... CHIEF TOAD, SIR..

...YES, SIR! CHIEF TOAD, SIR!

UH...

NOW, IT'S TIME FOR SOME RESEARCH!

IF THAT TOAD SEES ME, IT'LL BE TROUBLE...

...WHOOPS... I BETTER GET OUTTA HERE...

THE TABLES HAVE TURNED!

HA HA HA HA

COLORED MANGA.COM

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WHAT THE...?

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WAAAHH

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COLORED BY MANGA.COM

HUH!

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THE SCROLL LISTS THE NAMES OF JIRAIYA, THE FOURTH HOKAGE AND NARUTO.

...BUT WHAT AN IMPRESSIVE KID...

NO ONE ELSE HAS RIDDEN ON MY HEAD..

HEH HEH... THAT JIRAIYA...

...TELLING THE TRUTH...

...THAT SCAMP... I GUESS HE WAS...

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WELL, I COULD GIVE HIM SOME OF MY ENERGY, BUT... IT'S BETTER TO TAKE HIM TO...

HMPH... HE USED THE LAST OF HIS STRENGTH TO SUMMON ME.

...SINCE THE FOURTH HOKAGE.

KONOHA HOSPITAL

ゴゴゴゴ

WHAT THE...?!

COLORED MANGA.COM

HM...?

.....

WHERE'S THE PERVY SAGE?

...WHY AM I HERE WITH YOU...?

I MEAN... I'M HERE BECAUSE I CAME TO VISIT CHOJI, EVEN THOUGH IT'S A TOTAL DRAG...

WHEN I HEARD YOU WERE LAID OUT TOO, I POKED MY HEAD IN.

HUH? HOW SHOULD I KNOW?!

YOU FINALLY WOKE UP...

HEY...

...WHERE... AM I...?

I HEARD YOU'VE BEEN UNCONSCIOUS FOR THREE DAYS.

THE HOSPITAL!

...AND GOT A SEVERE CASE OF INDIGESTION.

NOT QUITE... AFTER HIS MATCH, CHOJI ATE TOO MUCH BARBECUE...

WHAT?! HE GOT HURT THAT BAD?

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MANGA.COM

IT'S A HUGE PAIN... I BOUGHT THIS FRUIT BASKET FOR CHOJI, BUT HE'S NOT ALLOWED TO HAVE IT...

OH! RIGHT!

COOL! YOU SURE?!

...DOCTORS' ORDERS. SO LET'S EAT IT OURSELVES.

THAT'S JUST LIKE CHOJI!

HA HA HA...

YOU TWO AREN'T THE TYPE TO GET FEMALE VISITORS, SO...

HMPH...

IT WOULD JUST BE A SHAME TO LET IT GO TO WASTE.

SHUT UP!

MAN! YOU'RE A PRETTY GOOD GUY!

...YOU'RE SUCH A FREAK...

HEE HEE HEE! JUST FOR FUN, WHY DON'T WE EAT IT IN FRONT OF CHOJI!

HUH? WHAT?!

.....

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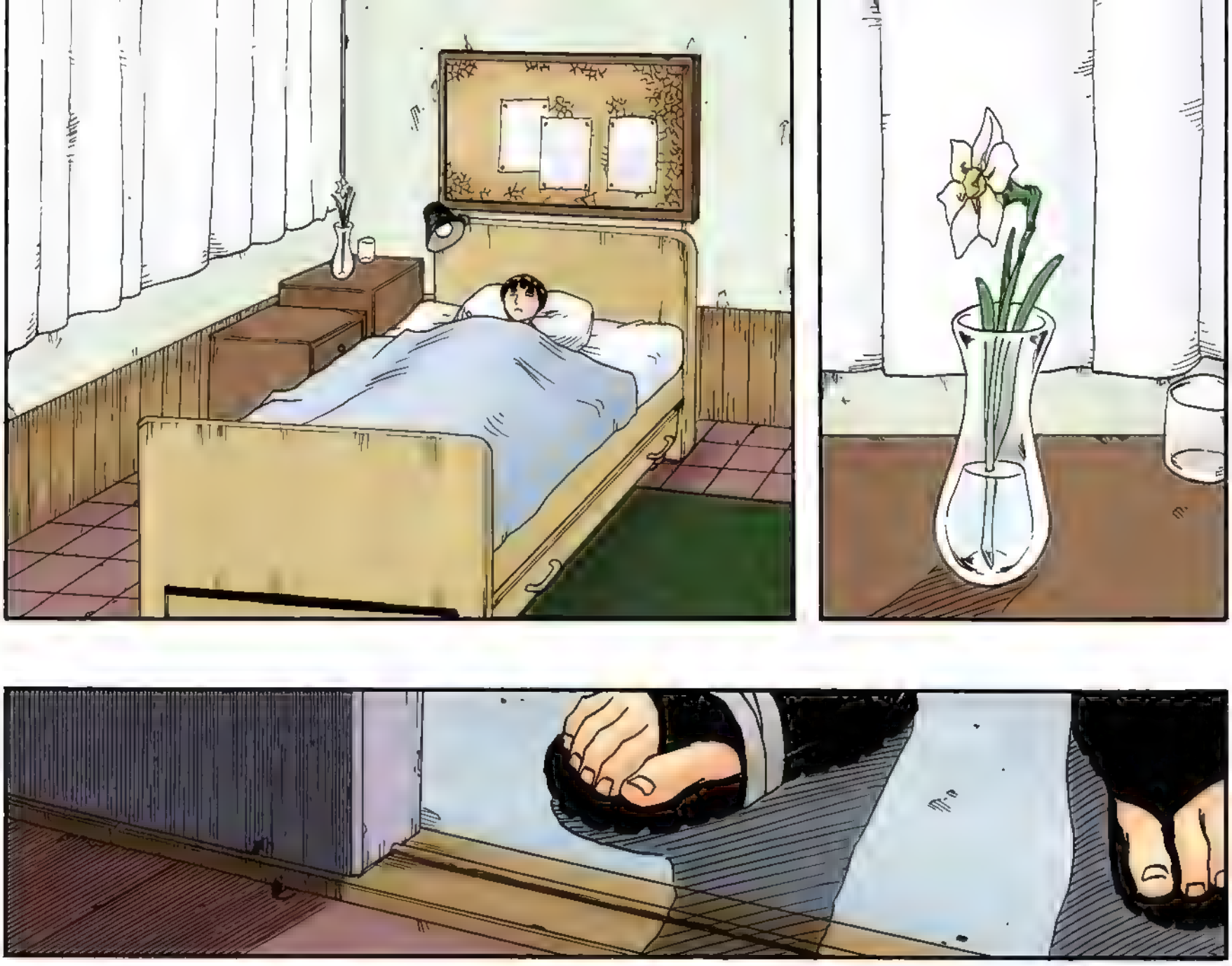

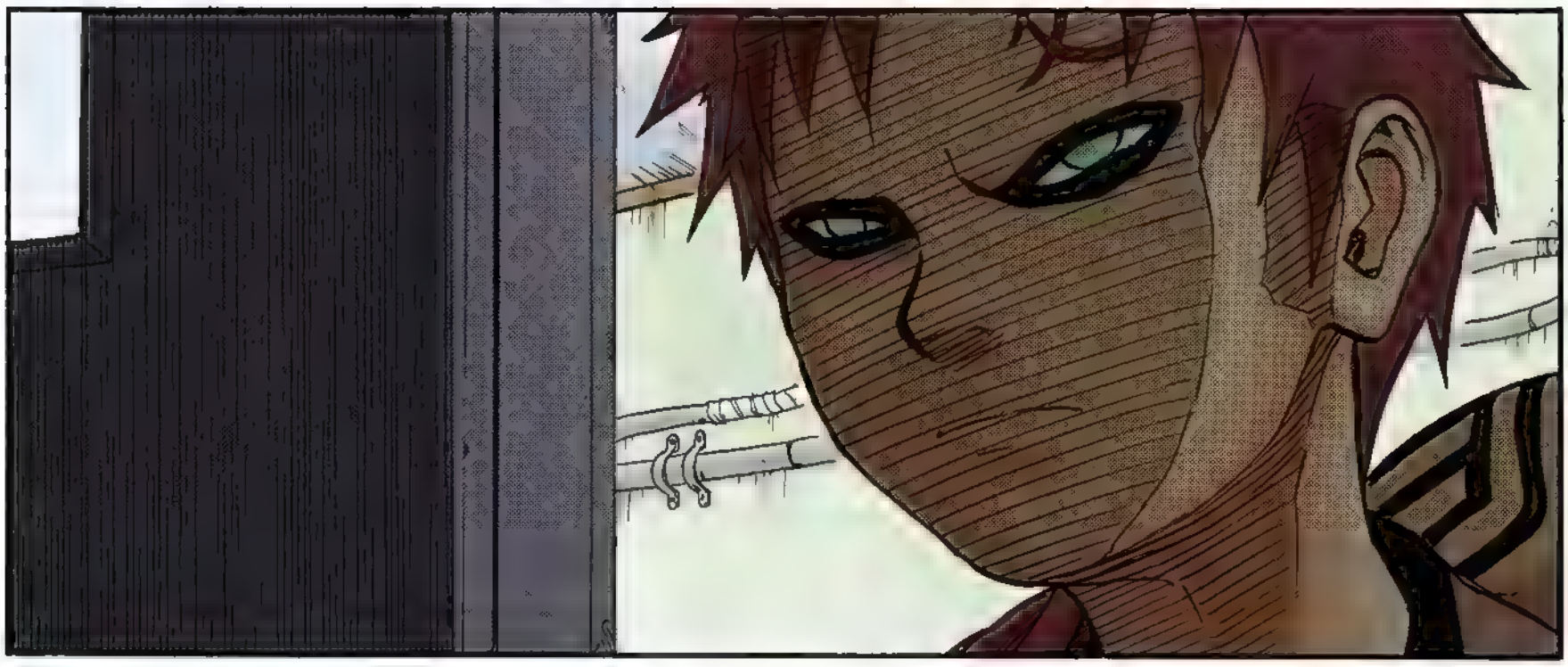

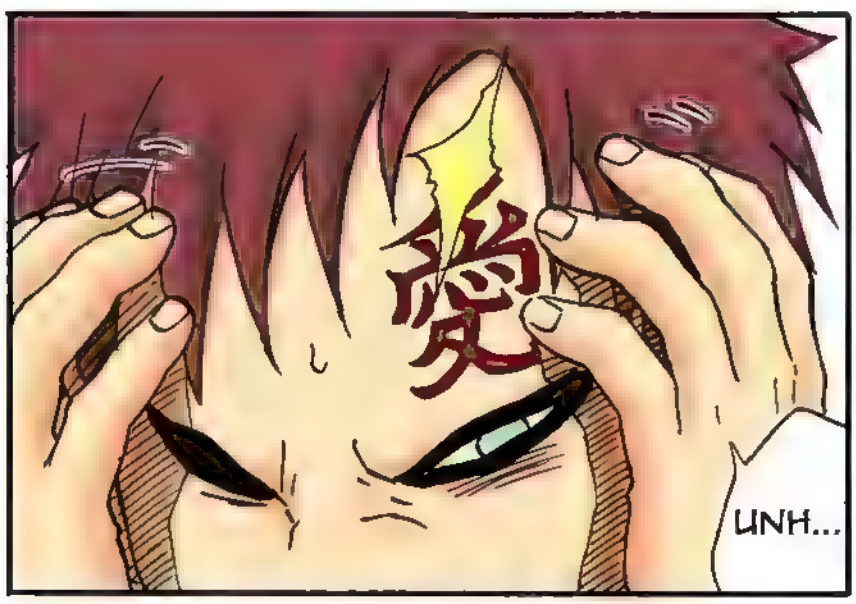

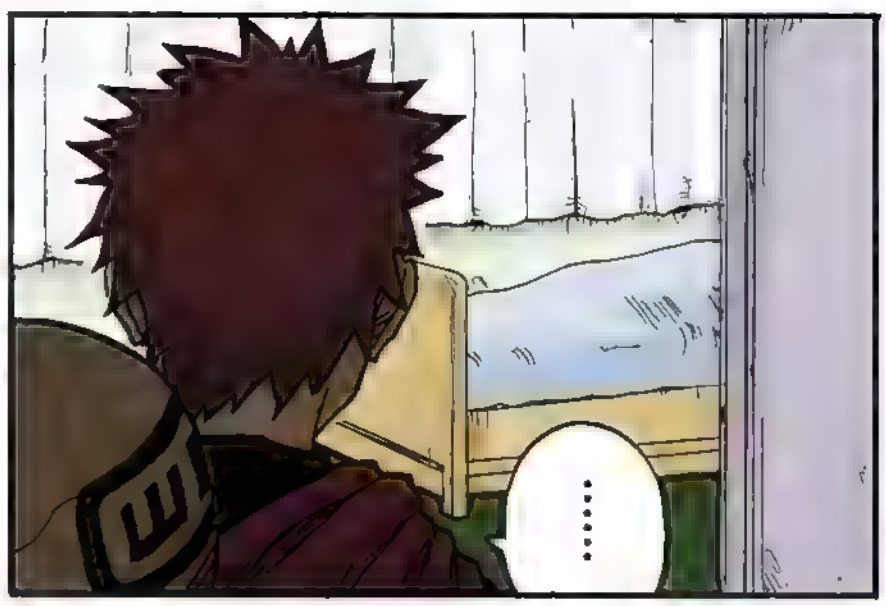

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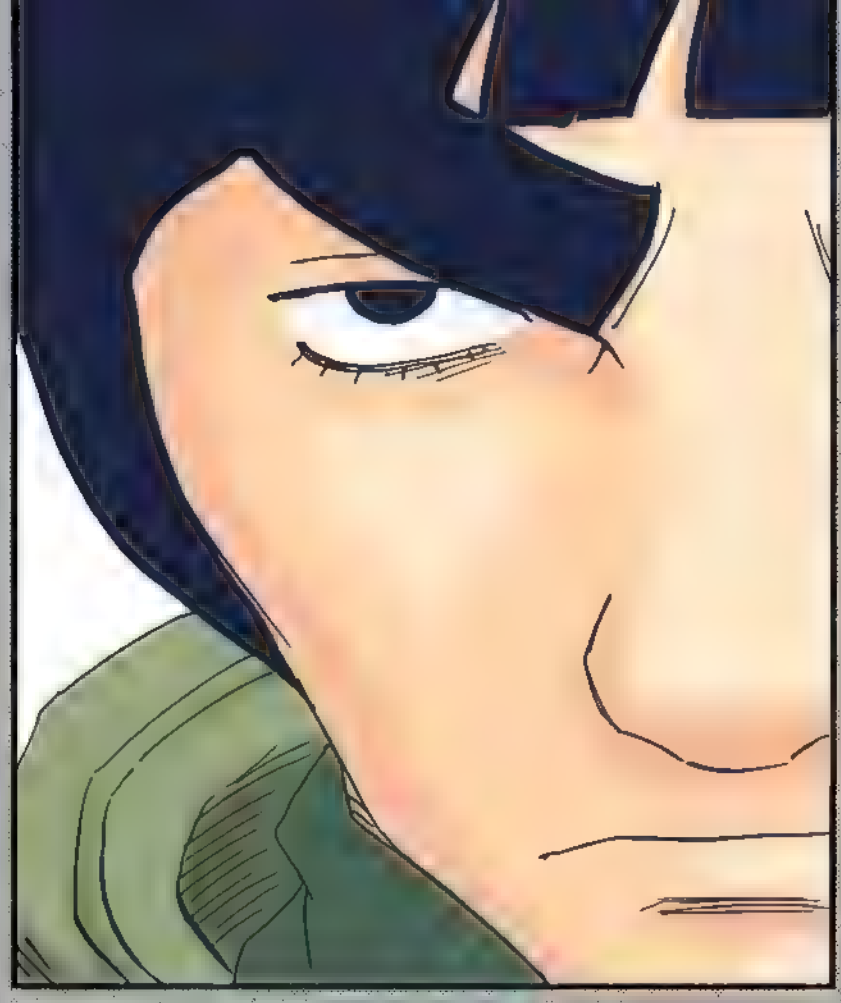

WHY ...?
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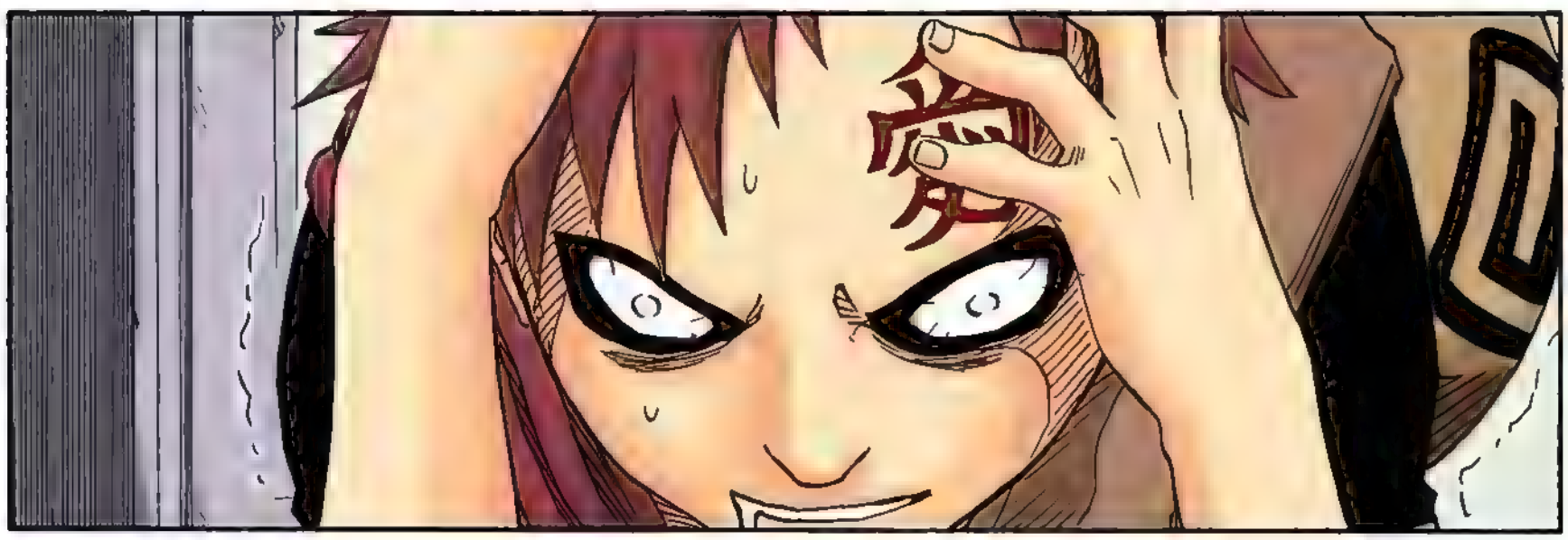

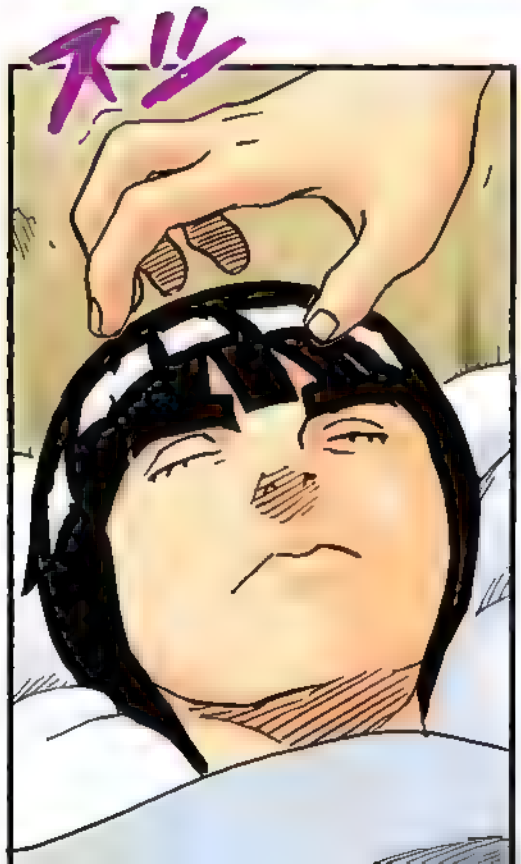
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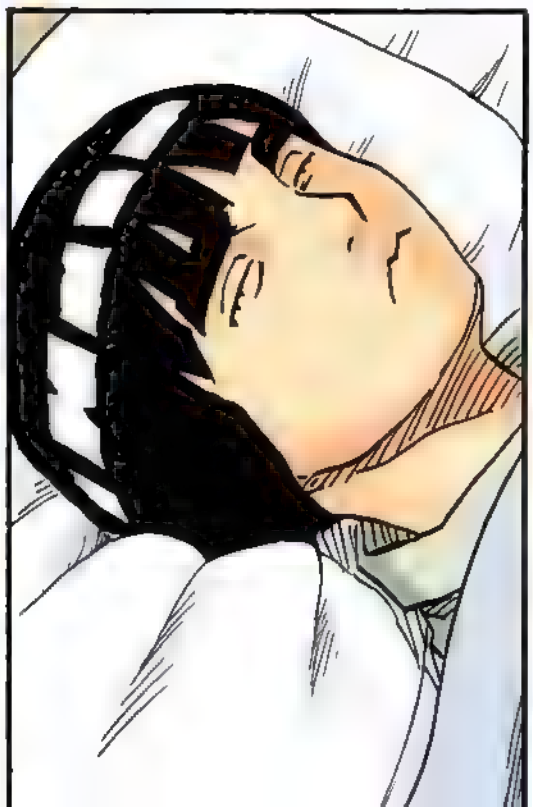

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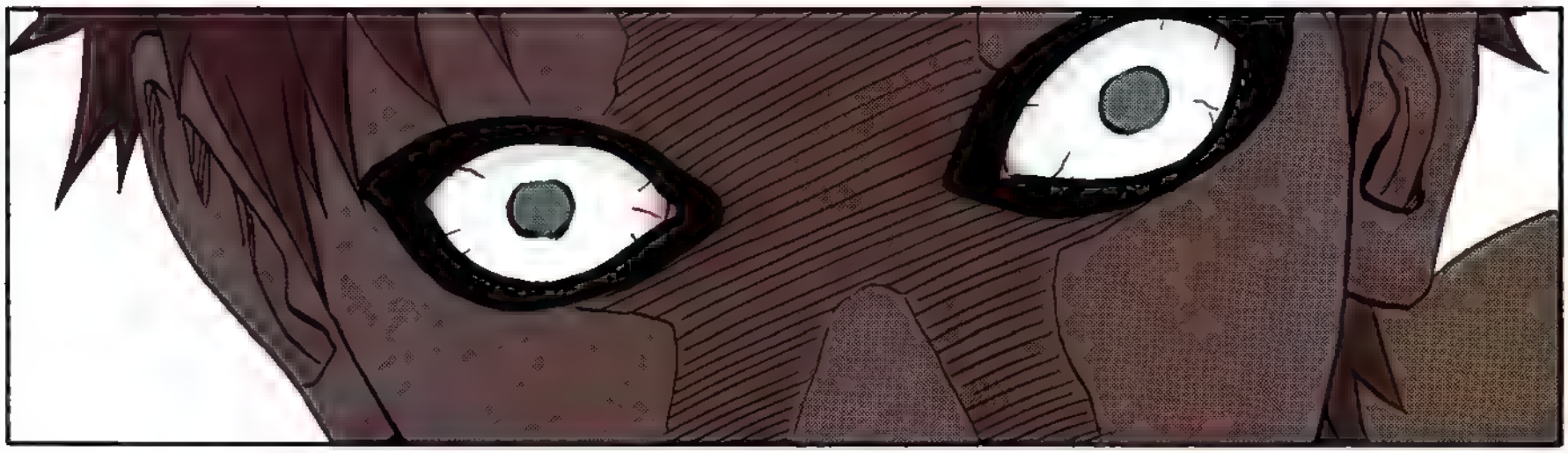

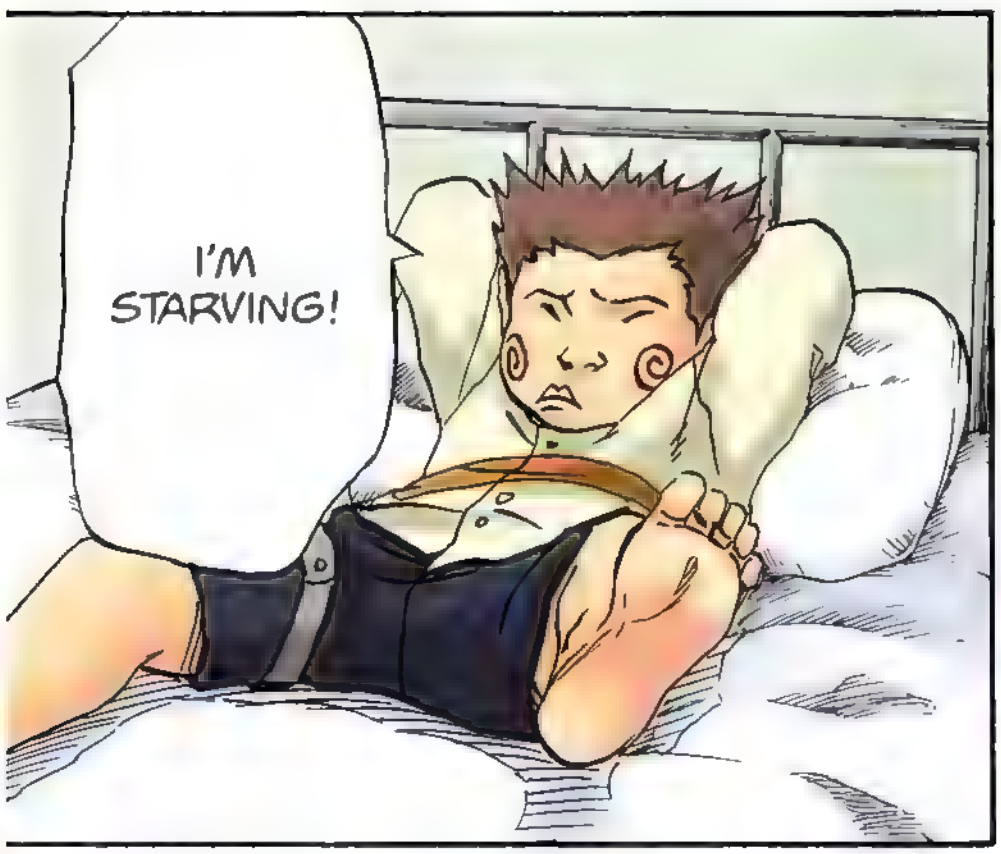

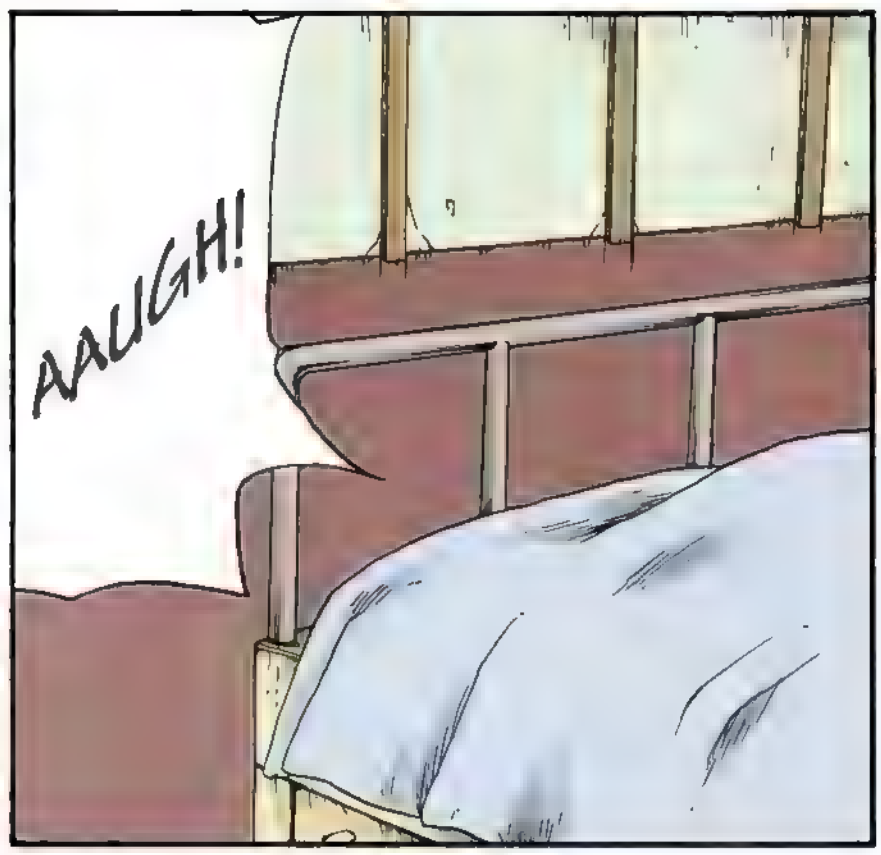

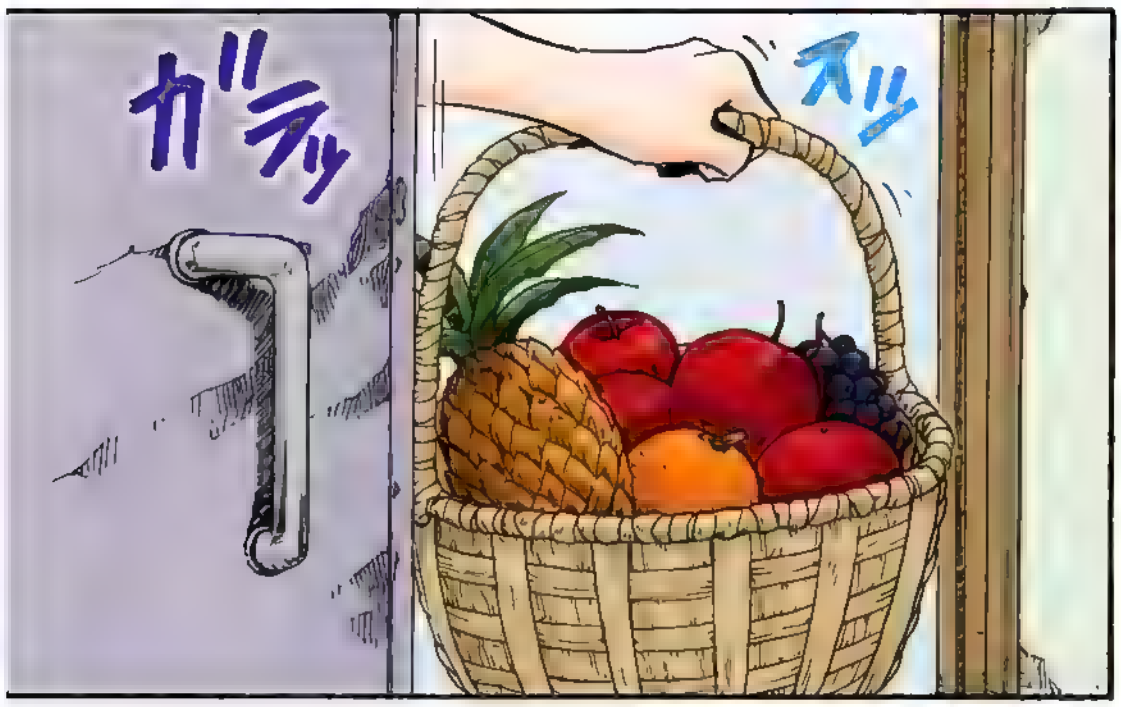

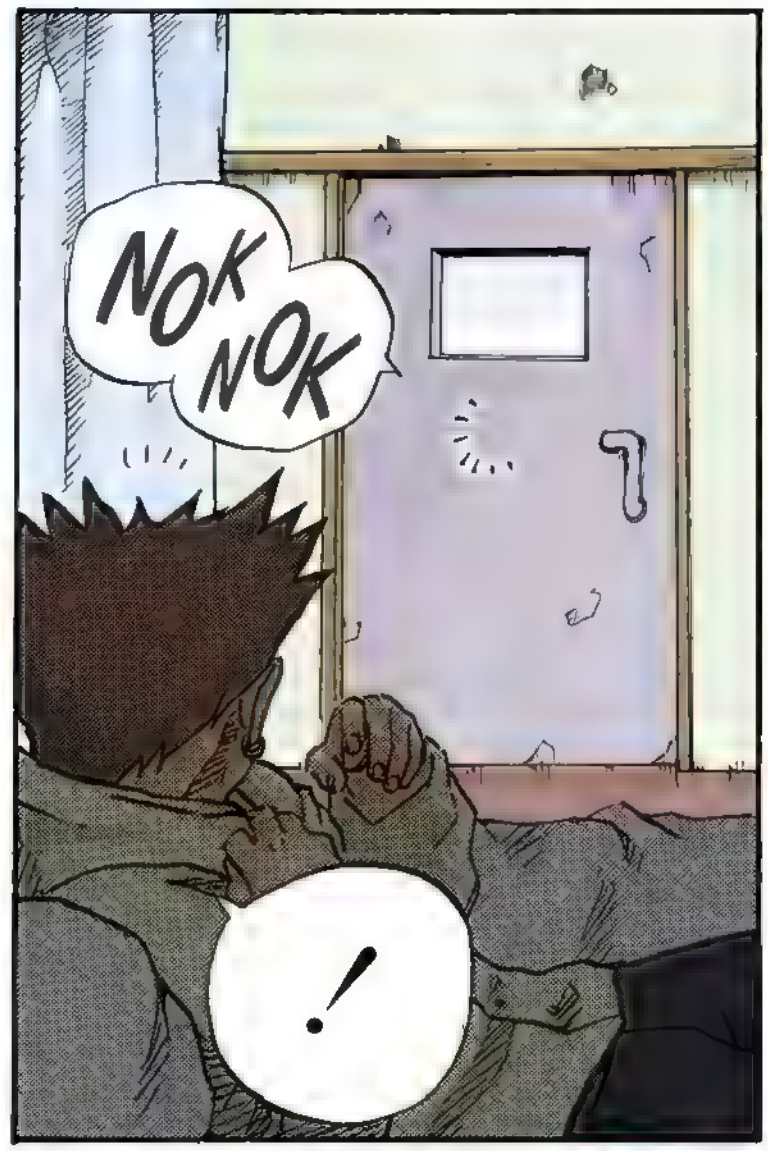

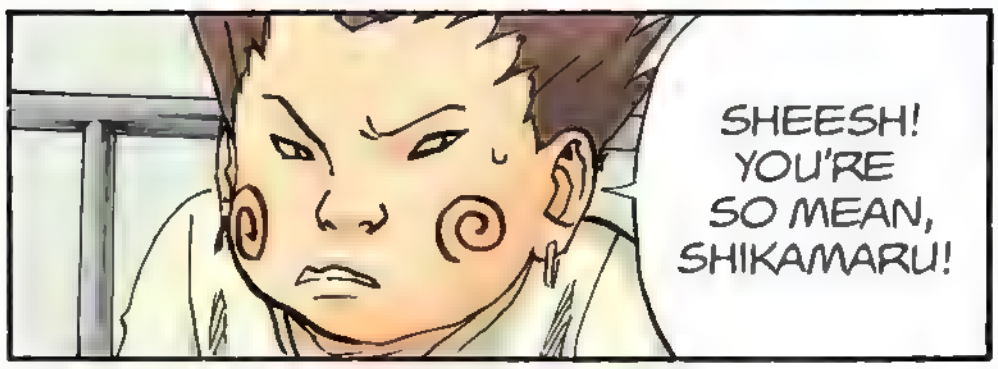

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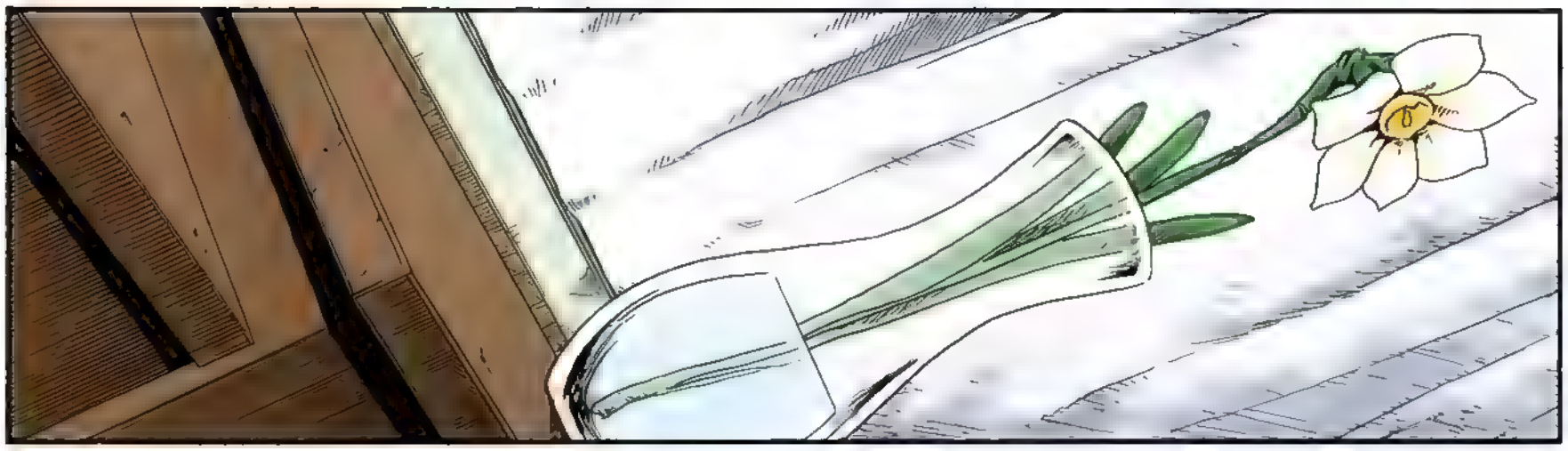

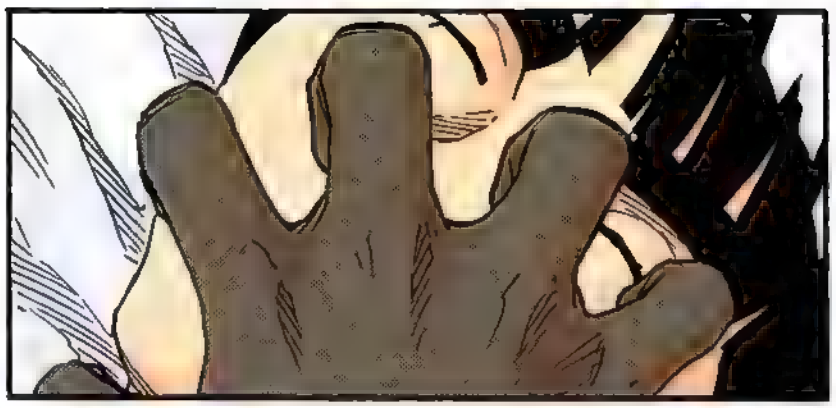

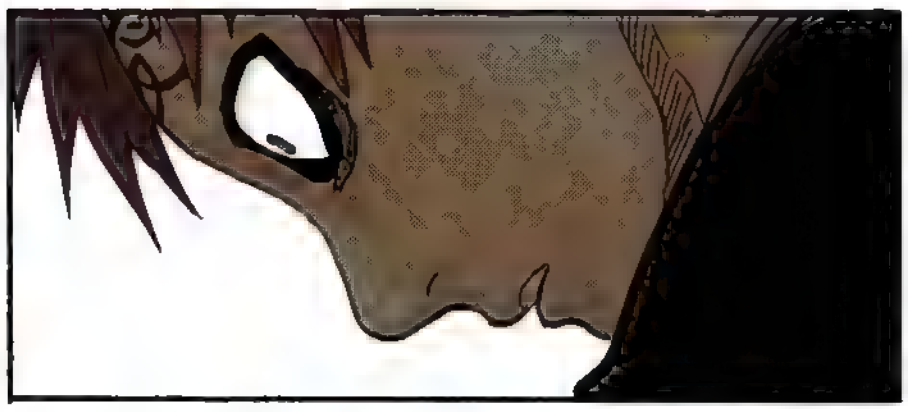

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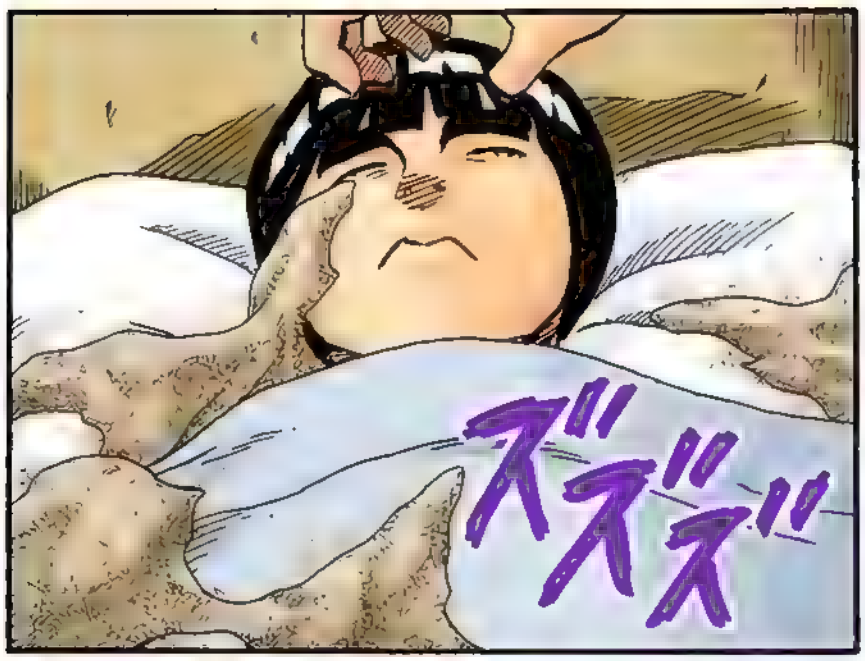

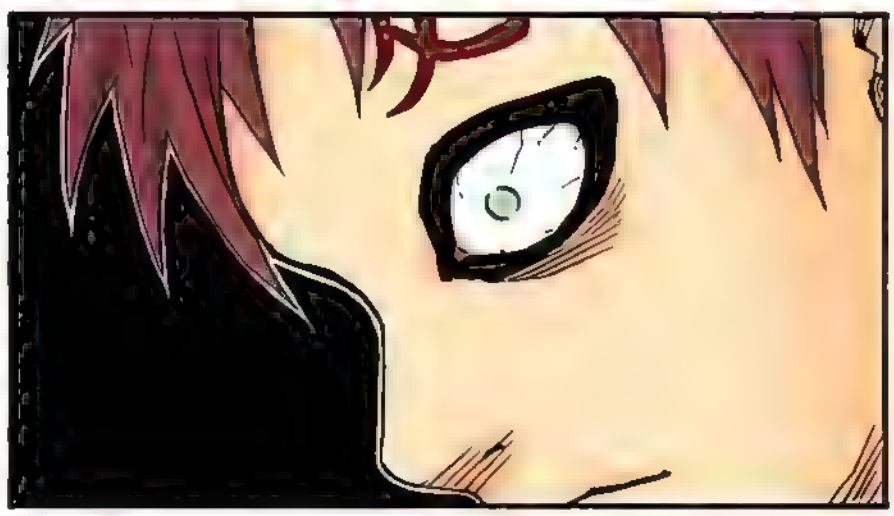

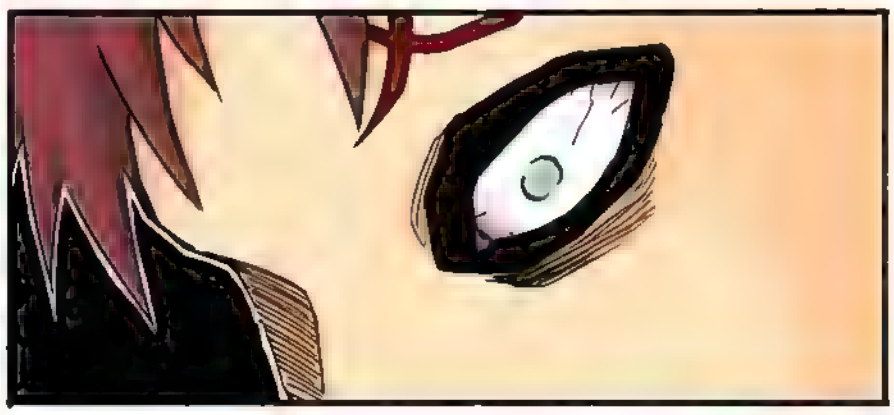

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...I CAN'T... MOVE...

WAAH!!

HEY, WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!

!!

DON'T FORGET, WHILE I'VE GOT THE SHADOW POSSESSION THING GOING, ANYTHING YOU DO TO HIM, I FEEL IT TOO!

SORRY, SHIKAMARU...!

...HEY, NARUTO...

COLORED MANGA.COM

HEY CHOJI, FEELING ANY BETTER?

OH! INO!

愛

.....

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...I DO SO GET VISITS FROM GIRLS!

HEH HEH! SEE, SHIKA-MARU?

WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU TRYING TO PULL?!

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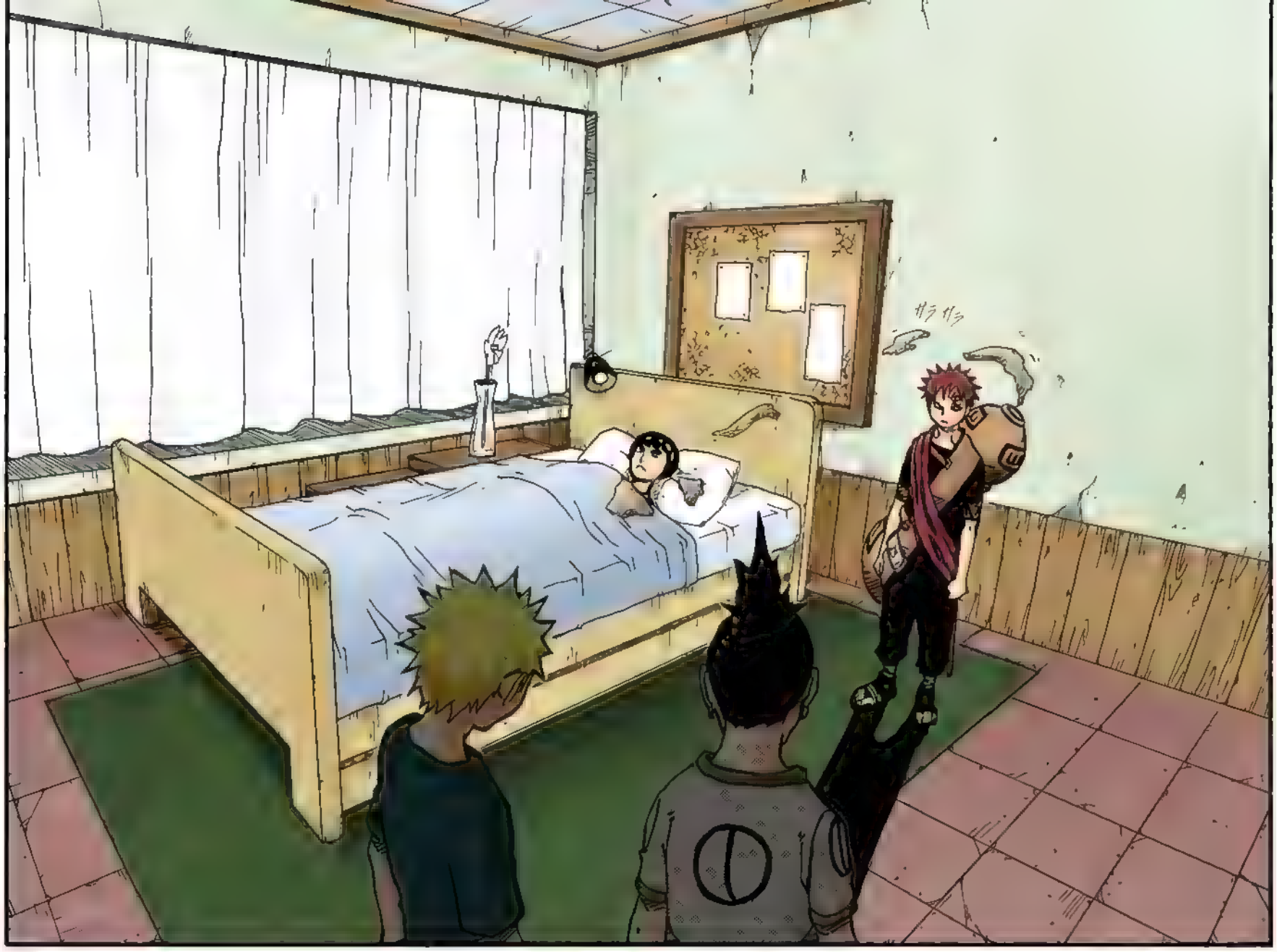

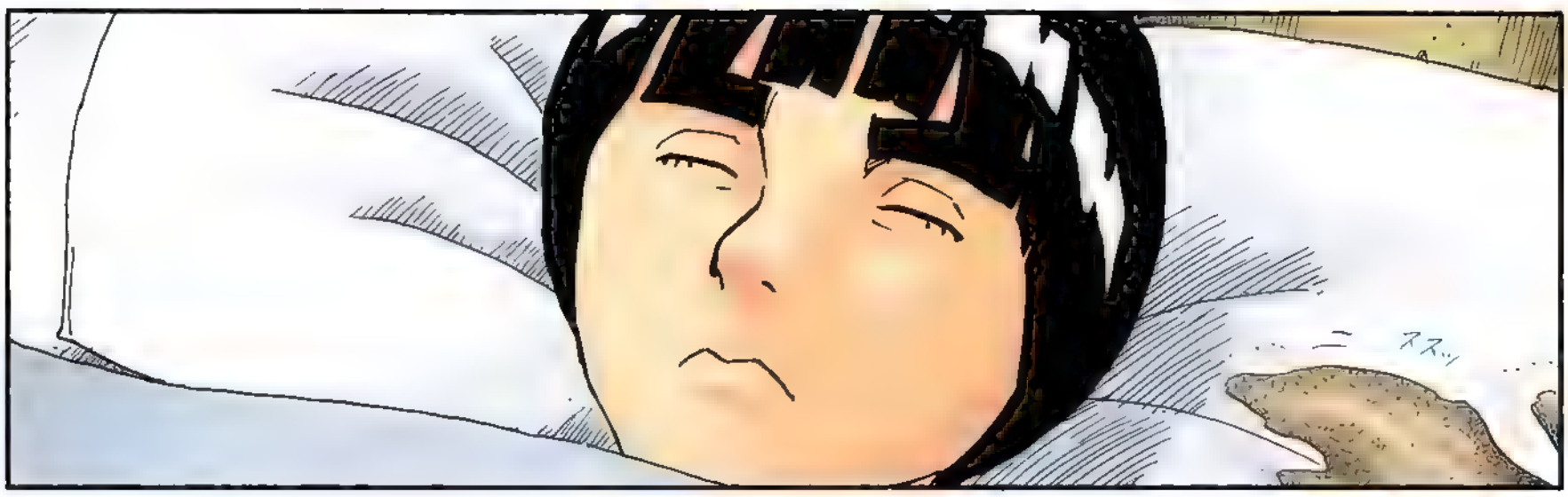

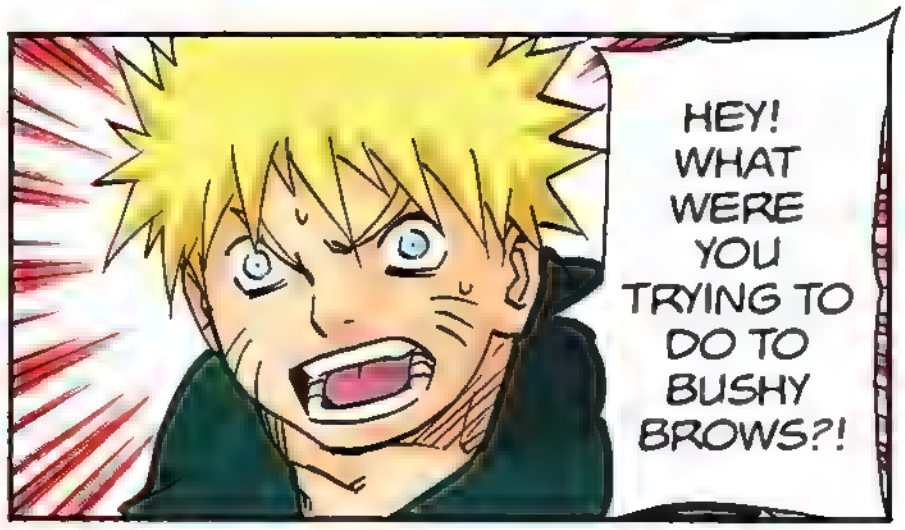

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HE SHOULD BE PARALYZED BY MY SHADOW POSSESSION, BUT...

HOW CAN HE BE SO CALM?

!

WHAT...?!

DO YOU HAVE A PERSONAL VENDETTA OR SOMETHING?

AND WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO DO THAT?

YOU WON YOUR MATCH AGAINST HIM!

I WANT TO KILL HIM BECAUSE... I JUST WANT TO KILL HIM.

NO, NOTHING LIKE THAT.

...!?

COLORED MANGA.COM

ACTUALLY, HE'S REALLY CREEPY...! I'VE GOT GOOSE-BUMPS...!

YOU REALLY WEREN'T RAISED RIGHT, WERE YOU?! YOU'RE SO SELF-CENTERED...

IF HE DECIDES TO GO FOR IT, HE MAY BE TOO MUCH FOR NARUTO AND ME TO HANDLE ALONE...

DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT THE HECK YOU'RE SAYING?!

DO YOU?!

HEY! QUIT IT, NARUTO!

WHAT?! JUST TRY IT...!

ビッ

...WHAT DO WE DO...?

...GEEZ...

IF YOU TRY TO INTERFERE...

...I'LL KILL YOU TOO.

COLORED MANGA.COM

BUT YOU SEE... NARUTO AND ME, WE'RE BOTH PRETTY CAPABLE FIGHTERS, TOO.

WE BOTH STILL HAVE MOVES IN RESERVE THAT NOBODY'S SEEN YET!

LET'S SEE IF I CAN PULL ONE OVER ON HIM...

I'VE SEEN YOU FIGHT... I KNOW YOU'RE STRONG.

BUT IF YOU SWEAR TO LEAVE LEE ALONE...

...WE'LL LET YOU LEAVE. NO HARM DONE!

PLUS, IT'LL BE TWO AGAINST ONE.

SO YOU'LL BE AT A DIS-ADVANTAGE.

TH... THIS GUY...!

IF YOU KEEP INTER-FERING, I'LL KILL YOU.

I'LL SAY THIS ONCE MORE...

COLORED MANGA.COM

I TOLD YOU TO QUIT IT!

DON'T FORGET... THIS GUY HAS MONSTER-LIKE STRENGTH!!

YOU CAN'T KILL ME!

BUT I'VE GOT A REAL LIVE MONSTER INSIDE OF ME!

I WON'T LOSE TO SOMEBODY LIKE HIM!

YOU IDIOT! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, EGGING HIM ON LIKE THAT?!

.....

COLORED MANGA.COM

JUST LIKE YOU SAID, I WASN'T "RAISED RIGHT"...

?

ACTUALLY... I'VE GOT ONE OF THOSE TOO.

!

A MONSTER, EH...?

IN ORDER TO CREATE THE WORLD'S STRONGEST SHINOBI, MY FATHER USED NINJUTSU TO IMPLANT AN INCARNATION OF SAND WITHIN MY BODY...

IN THE PROCESS OF MY BIRTH, I STOLE THE LIFE OF THE WOMAN I WAS SUPPOSED TO CALL "MOTHER"...

I WAS BORN A MONSTER!

COLORED MANGA.COM

KNOWN AS SHUKAKU, IT WAS THE SPIRIT OF A FORMER SUNAGAKURE ELDER...

...THAT HAD BEEN SEALED INSIDE A TEAKETTLE.

!

AN INCAR-NATION OF SAND?!

TO GO THAT FAR... THAT'S CRAZY.

A TYPE OF POSSESSION ART THAT CAUSES A FETUS TO BE FORCIBLY POSSESSED...?

.....

INSIDE OF HIM TOO...

HE'S GOT... SOME-THING...

.....

COLORED MANGA.COM

LOVE?

HEH... WHAT KIND OF PARENT DOES A THING LIKE THAT?!

WHAT TWISTED LOVE.

...DON'T JUDGE ME BY YOUR STANDARDS...

!?

...LET ME TELL YOU WHAT THAT WORD MEANS TO ME.

"FAMILY"...

!

COLORED MANGA.COM

...CONNECTED BY HATRED AND MURDEROUS INTENT.

MERE HULLS OF FLESH...

...SO THAT I COULD BE BROUGHT TO LIFE AS THE VILLAGE'S GREATEST MASTER-PIECE...

...AND AS KAZEKAGE'S SON.

MY MOTHER'S LIFE WAS SACRIFICED...

!

AT FIRST, I THOUGHT *THAT* WAS LOVE...

.....

I WAS RAISED IN ISOLATION, SPOILED AND OVERPRO-TECTED...

MY FATHER TAUGHT ME SECRET SHINOBI SKILLS, ONE AFTER ANOTHER.

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WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

...UNTIL THE INCIDENT.

...WHAT INCI-DENT...?!

?

...SO WHAT THE HECK HAPPENED?!

.....

.....

.....

COLORED BY NARUTOFANGA.COM

FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS... EVER SINCE I TURNED SIX...

..MY FATHER HAS BEEN TRYING TO ASSASSINATE ME. I'VE LOST COUNT OF HOW MANY ATTEMPTS HE'S MADE...

HUH?

!

.....

WHAT? BUT YOU JUST SAID YOUR FATHER SPOILED YOU...

SO WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

.....

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IT SEEMS THE FOOLS OF THE VILLAGE FINALLY REALIZED I HAD EMOTIONAL ISSUES...

HAVING BEEN BORN THROUGH JUTSU... MY MIND IS UNSTABLE ...

A PRESENCE THAT IS TOO POWERFUL BECOMES A PRESENCE THAT IS FEARED.

BUT AT THE SAME TIME, I WAS A FEARSOME AND DANGEROUS OBJECT...

TO MY FATHER, IN HIS ROLE AS KAZEKAGE, I WAS THE VILLAGE'S MOST POWERFUL WEAPON...

PRIOR TO THAT, I HAD MERELY BEEN **HANDLED WITH CARE**...

...LIKE ANY OTHER HAZARDOUS INSTRUMENT.

THEY DETERMINED THAT I WAS TOO GREAT A **LIABILITY.**

SO APPARENTLY, WHEN I TURNED SIX...

COLORED MANGA.COM

TO THEM, I AM NOW A RELIC OF THE PAST THAT THEY WISH TO ERASE AND FORGET.

.....

AT FIRST, WHEN I ASKED MYSELF THAT, I HAD NO ANSWER.

SO... FOR WHAT PURPOSE DO I EXIST? WHY AM I ALIVE?

WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT...?

...I GET IT...

I THINK...

OTHERWISE... I MIGHT AS WELL BE DEAD.

BUT WHILE I CONTINUE TO LIVE, I NEED A **REASON.**

COLORED BY MANGA.COM

...HE'S JUST LIKE ME...

...THIS GUY...

...I WAS ABLE TO DISCERN A REASON FOR LIVING AND JUSTIFY MY OWN EXISTENCE.

BY KILLING THOSE WHO SOUGHT TO KILL ME...

"I EXIST TO KILL ALL HUMANS OTHER THAN MYSELF."

LIVING IN CONSTANT FEAR, KNOWING I MIGHT BE ASSASSINATED AT ANY MOMENT, I FINALLY FOUND INNER PEACE.

SO THIS IS WHAT I CAME UP WITH...

...FOR AS LONG AS THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE FOR ME TO KILL...

THEY ALLOW ME TO EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF LIVING...

IF ALL OTHER PEOPLE EXIST TO MAGNIFY THAT LOVE, THEN THERE IS NO MORE SPLENDID WORLD THAN THIS ONE.

I WOULD FIGHT ONLY FOR MYSELF AND LOVE ONLY MYSELF.

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THIS IS SCARY..

WH...WHAT THE...?

...I USED TO BE LIKE THAT TOO, ALL ALONE... NOT KNOWING WHY I WAS ALIVE... IN PAIN... BUT THEN MASTER IRUKA FINALLY NOTICED ME... ACKNOWLEDGED ME...

...AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, I EXPERIENCED WARMTH AND LOVE.

BUT THIS GUY...

...ONLY ABLE TO ASSERT HIS EXISTENCE BY KILLING OTHERS...

HE'S STILL LIVING ALL ALONE...

...THEN I WILL NOT CEASE TO EXIST.

愛

THE WORLD THAT HE LIVES IN... IT'S TOO DIFFERENT FROM OURS...!!

I NEVER KNEW PEOPLE LIKE HIM EXISTED...

...THAT WE CAN WIN AGAINST HIM...

THERE'S JUST NO WAY...

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WHAT'S THE MATTER, NARUTO...?!

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!

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ズ!! ズ!!

!!

...HELP ME FEEL ALIVE!

...NOW...

!!

ENOUGH!

COLORED MANGA.COM

...UNLESS YOU'RE EAGER TO BECOME AN INPATIENT TODAY?

UNH...!

THE FINALS START TOMORROW. DON'T BE IN SUCH A HURRY...

I WILL KILL YOU ALL...

...JUST YOU WAIT.

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ナンバー98：THE PROUD FAILURE!!

AND SO IT BEGINS...

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THE PROUD FAILURE!!
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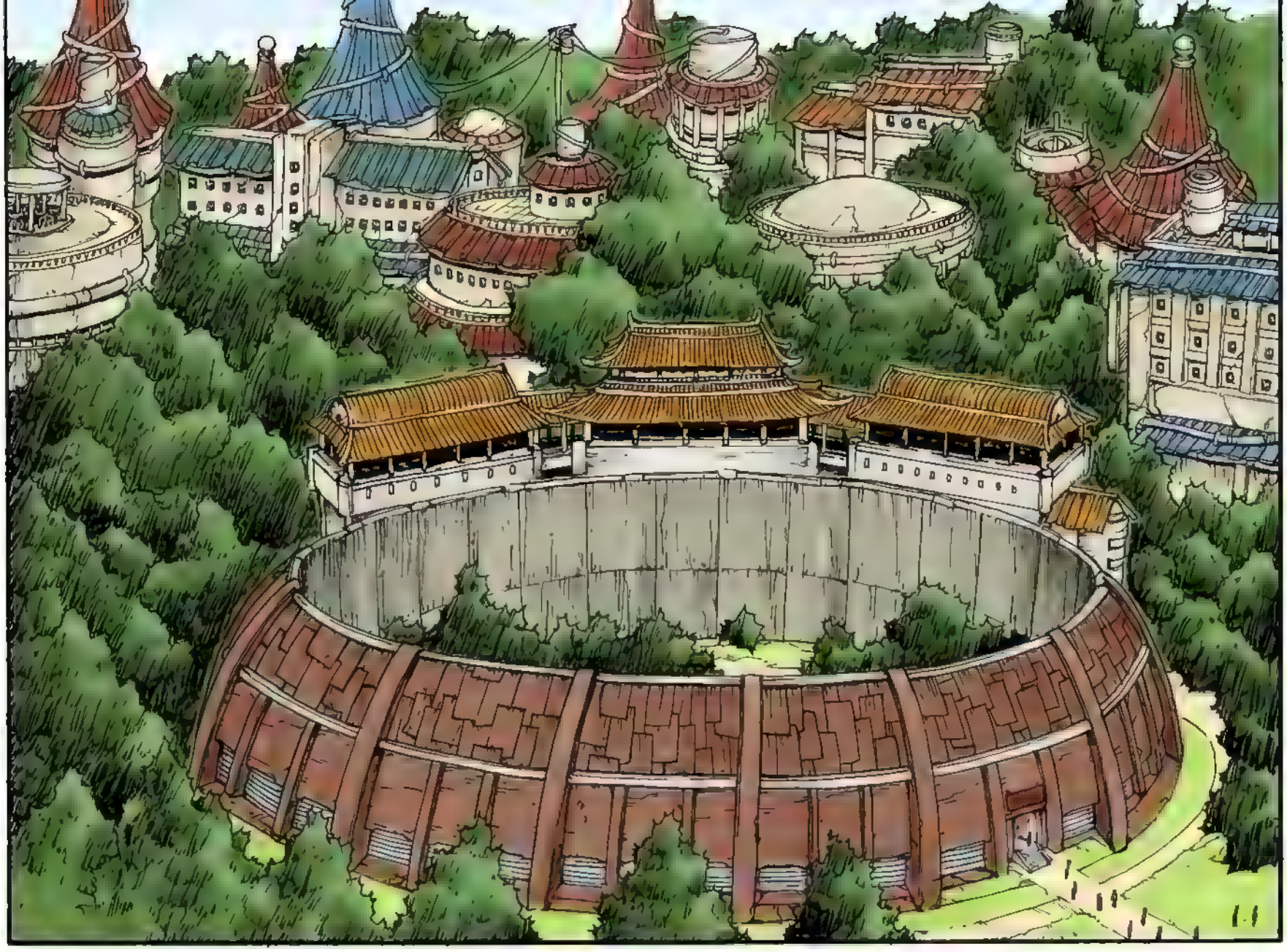

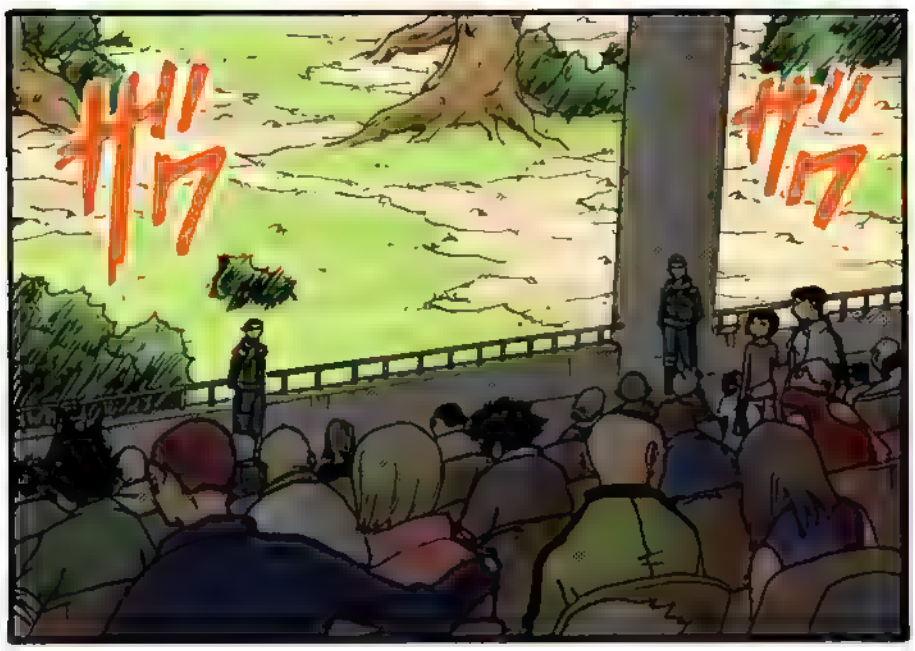

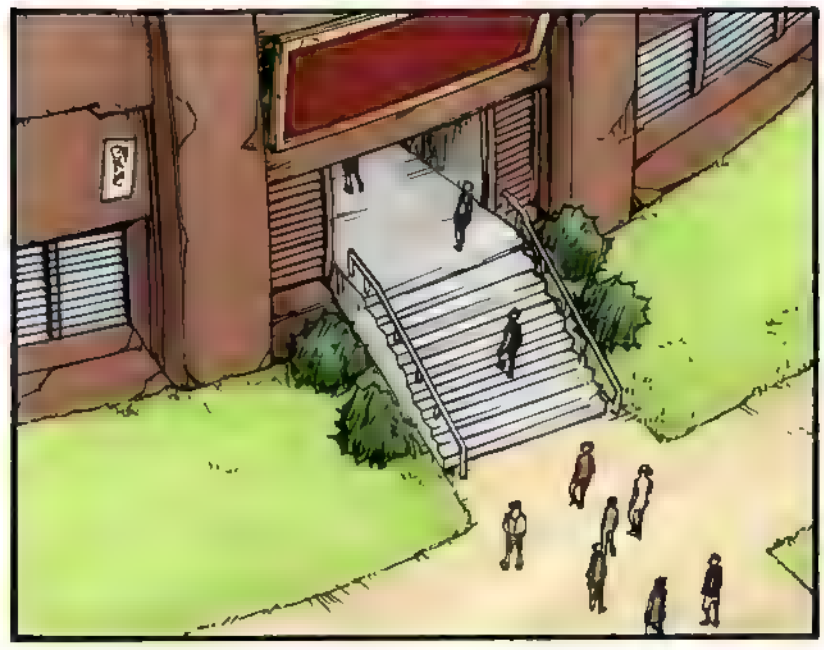

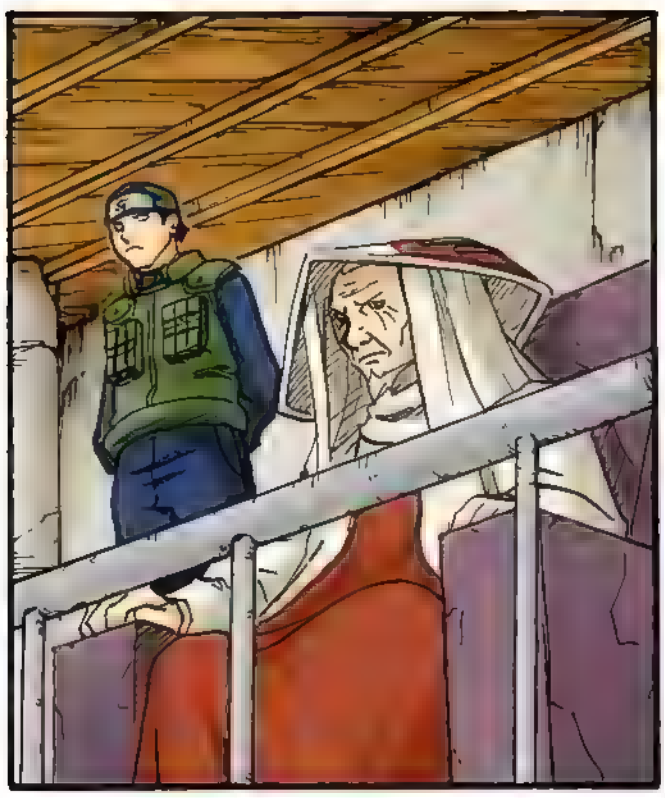

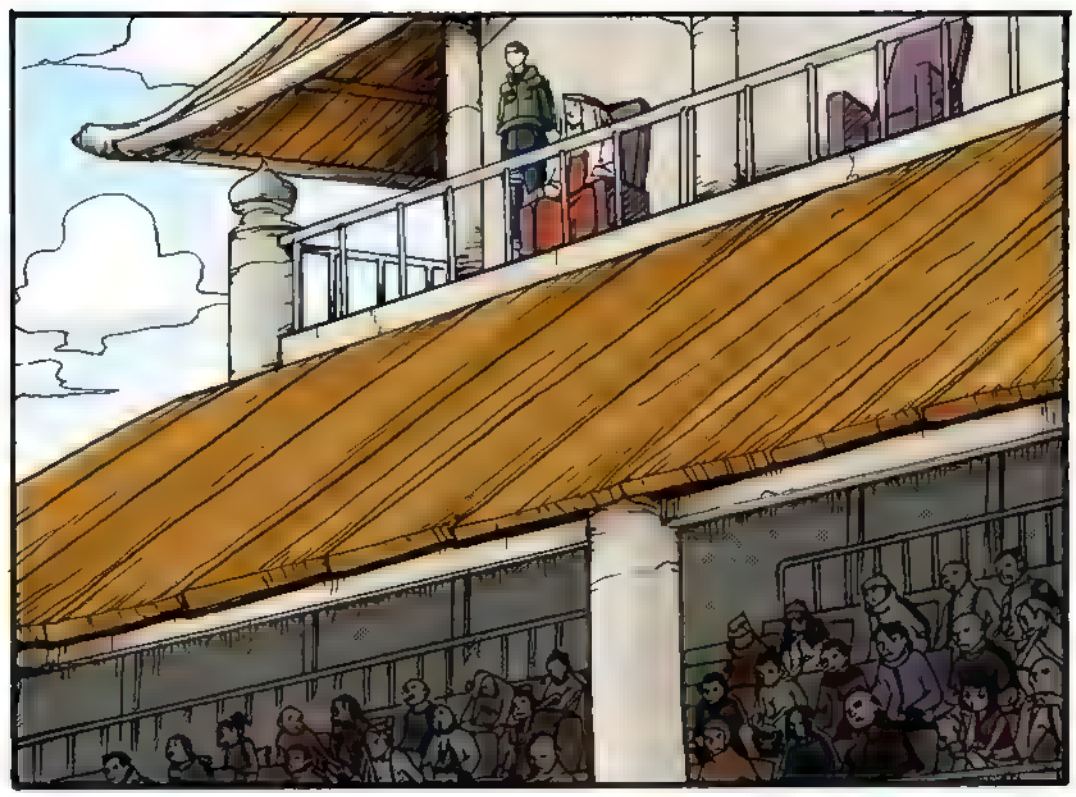

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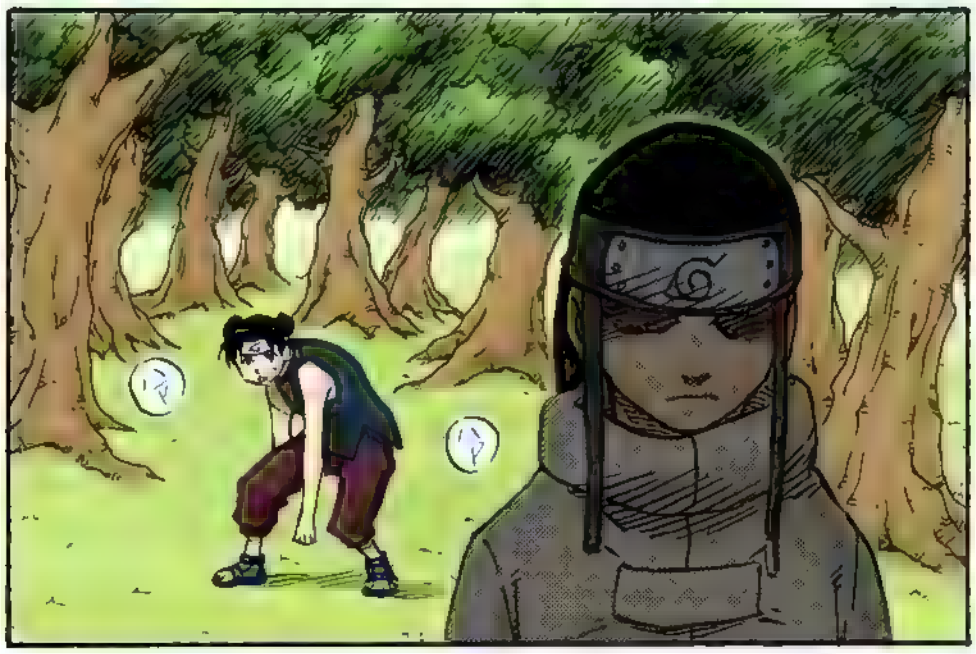

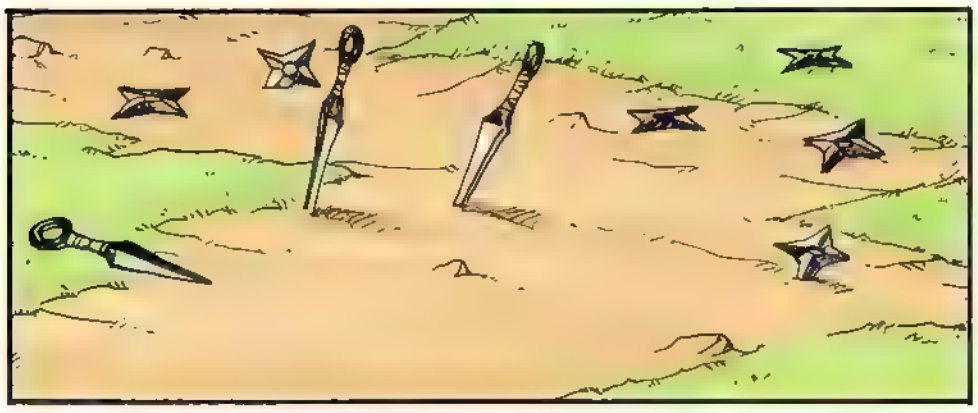

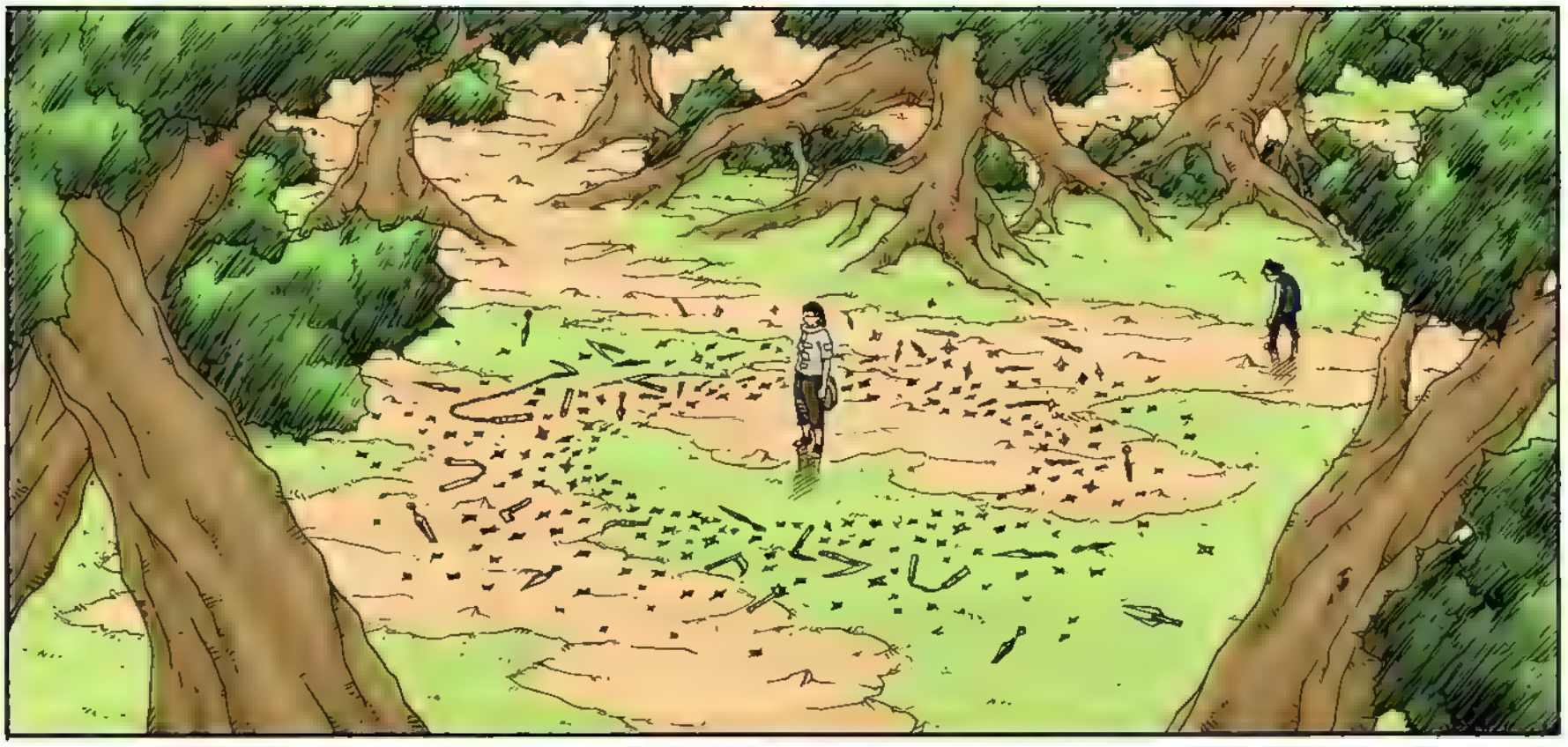

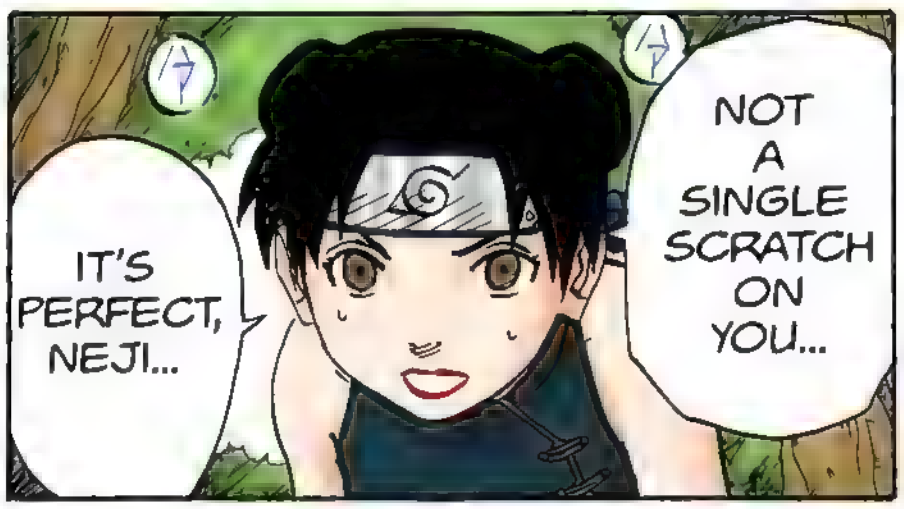

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人生

I WAS SO NERVOUS... I HARDLY SLEPT...

IT'S TIME, AT LAST...

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.....

SO... I'M UP AGAINST **HIM** IN THE FIRST ROUND...

...THAT THE STRONGEST GENIN IN KONOHA IS A MEMBER OF MY OWN TEAM...

I WAS REFERRING TO...

...I'VE MENTIONED IT BEFORE, I'M SURE...

THESE TENKETSU...

THEY'RE UNDETECT-ABLE, EVEN TO MY SHARINGAN EYE.

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HYUGA NEJI!

!!!

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I CAN MAKE A FROG NOW... SO I'LL BE ALL RIGHT...

HA HA HA HA!

HA HA!

.....

ALL OF THESE GUYS...

...THEY HAVE REAL NASTY LOOKS ABOUT THEM...

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.....

HA...

.....

COLORED MANGA.COM

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HEY, HINATA... YOU... YOU'RE ALL BETTER NOW?

HUH?!

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WH... WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE...?

AREN'T THE FINALS TODAY?

?

N...N... NARUTO!

COLORED
NARUTOMANGA.COM

THIS IS WHERE I BECAME A GENIN...!

I JUST... FELT LIKE COMING BY HERE, THAT'S ALL.

Y...YOU'RE RIGHT... I'M SORRY...

WHY DOES IT MATTER, ANYWAY?!

N...NO PARTICULAR REASON!

O...OH WOW... B...BUT WHY?

...HINATA... NEJI'S YOUR COUSIN, RIGHT...?

Y... YEAH.

.....

SIGH—

.....

COLORED MANGA.COM

.....

Y...YEAH...

.....

...HE REALLY IS STRONG, ISN'T HE...?

HA HA! SURE! 'CAUSE I'M STRONG TOO!

'CAUSE...

B...BUT I REALLY THINK... OF ALL PEOPLE, YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO WIN AGAINST HIM, NARUTO!

.....

.....

HA HA..

.....

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...I...I... FEEL LIKE I'VE CHANGED...

FROM THE OUTSIDE, I MIGHT NOT SEEM ANY DIFFERENT, BUT...

Y...YOU KNOW, I... WHEN YOU CHEERED ME ON, NARUTO...

...I FELT LIKE SOMEHOW I BECAME STRONGER THAN BEFORE...

AND WHEN THE PRELIMI-NARIES WERE OVER, I STARTED TO LIKE MYSELF JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE.

BECAUSE... THAT'S MY SHINOBI WAY, TOO!

...I N-NEVER GO BACK ON MY WORD...

HEH HEH HEH...

WOW! BECAUSE OF ME?

I GUESS I AM AN AWESOME INFLUENCE!

N-NARUTO... IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF YOU...

A-AT LEAST... THAT'S WHAT I THINK...

!

...HEY... HINATA...

.....

COLORED MANGA.COM

.....

HUH?

...IS THAT REALLY HOW YOU FEEL?

...I MIGHT SEEM REALLY STRONG, BUT... I'M USUALLY JUST TRYING TO ACT TOUGH...

...'CAUSE I'M EMBARRASSED ABOUT HOW I SCREW UP ALL THE TIME.

THAT'S NOT TRUE...

AND EVEN IF YOU DO MESS UP...

Y... YOU'RE REALLY INSPIRING TO WATCH...

!

BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT PERFECT...

AND...

I-IF YOU ASK ME...

YOU'RE A PROUD FAILURE...!

COLORED MANGA.COM

I...I BELIEVE YOU'RE AN INCREDIBLY STRONG PERSON, NARUTO...

BECAUSE YOU MAKE MISTAKES... BUT YOU STILL HAVE THE GUTS TO GET BACK UP AND KEEP FIGHTING...

THAT'S WHAT I CONSIDER TRUE STRENGTH...

...YOU KNOW, FUNNILY ENOUGH, I WAS ACTUALLY FEELING A LITTLE DEPRESSED EARLIER..

...BUT NOW... SUDDENLY, I'M FEELING A LOT BETTER!

.....

THANKS, HINATA!

.....

.....

ズ～ン

...DARK AND PLAIN AND TIMID.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE SORT OF A WEIRDO...

...HUH?

ドキッ

HM...?

Y'KNOW WHAT I THOUGHT ABOUT YOU?

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BUT ACTUALLY...

I THINK I KINDA LIKE FOLKS LIKE YOU!

WELL, I'M GONNA HEAD OVER TO THE EXAM!

YOU SHOULD COME WATCH ME BLOW NEJI AWAY!

LATER!

HEY, HINATA! SORRY I'M LATE...

SHINO'S MATCH DOESN'T START 'TIL LATER, SO WE SHOULD STILL BE OKAY...

.....

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HUH?

WHAT IS IT?

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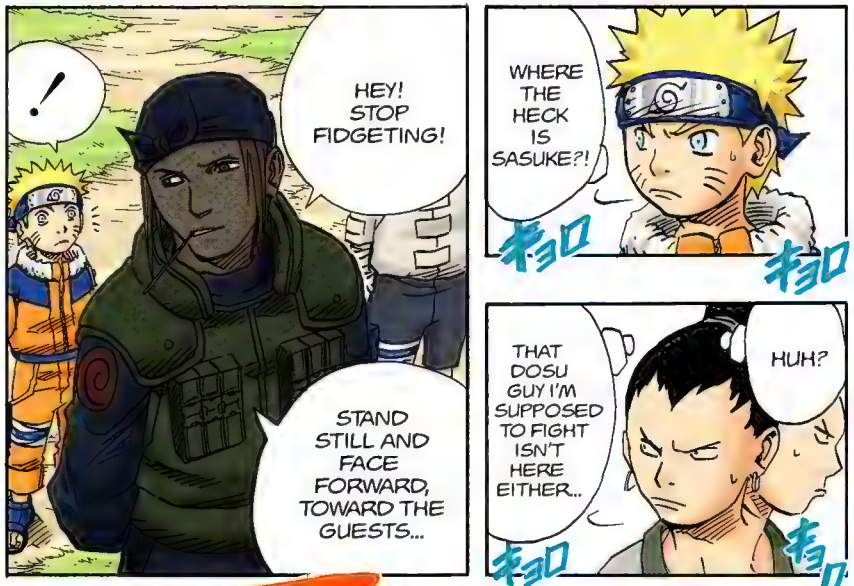
!
HEY! STOP FIDGETING!
STAND STILL AND FACE FORWARD, TOWARD THE GUESTS...

WHERE THE HECK IS SASUKE?!
キョロ
キョロ

THAT DOSU GUY I'M SUPPOSED TO FIGHT ISN'T HERE EITHER...
HUH?
キョロ
キョロ

.....
...SASUKE'S STILL NOT HERE...

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...FOR ALL OF YOU ARE THE STARS OF THESE FINALS!

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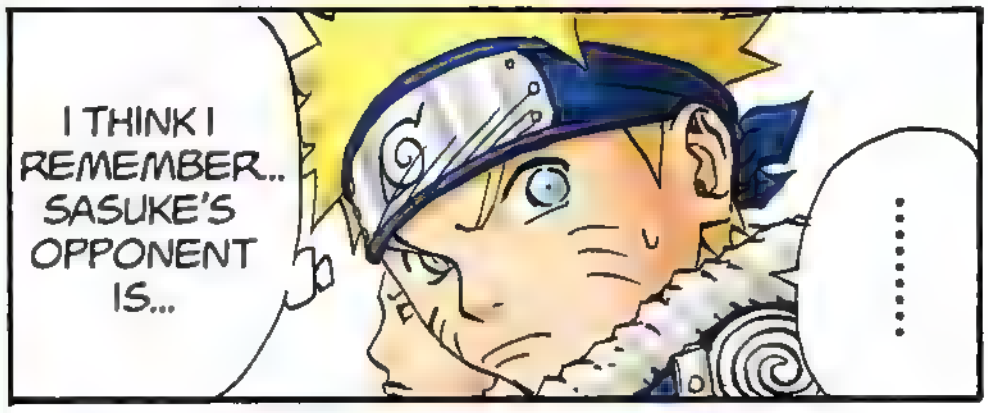

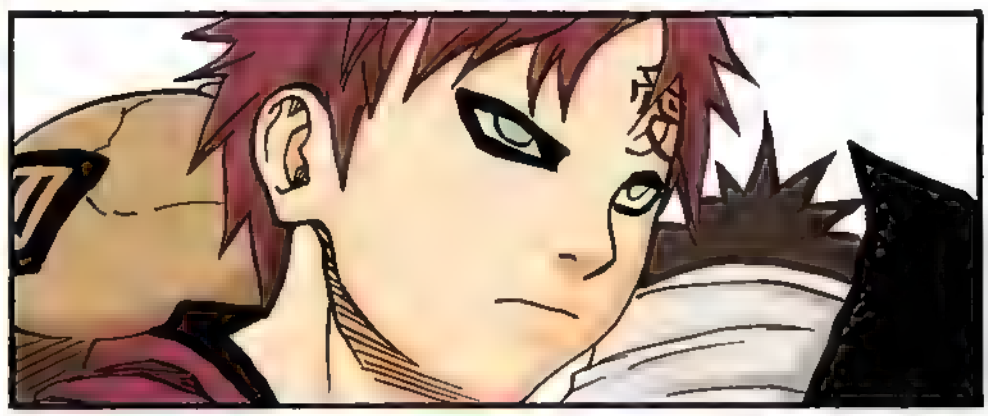

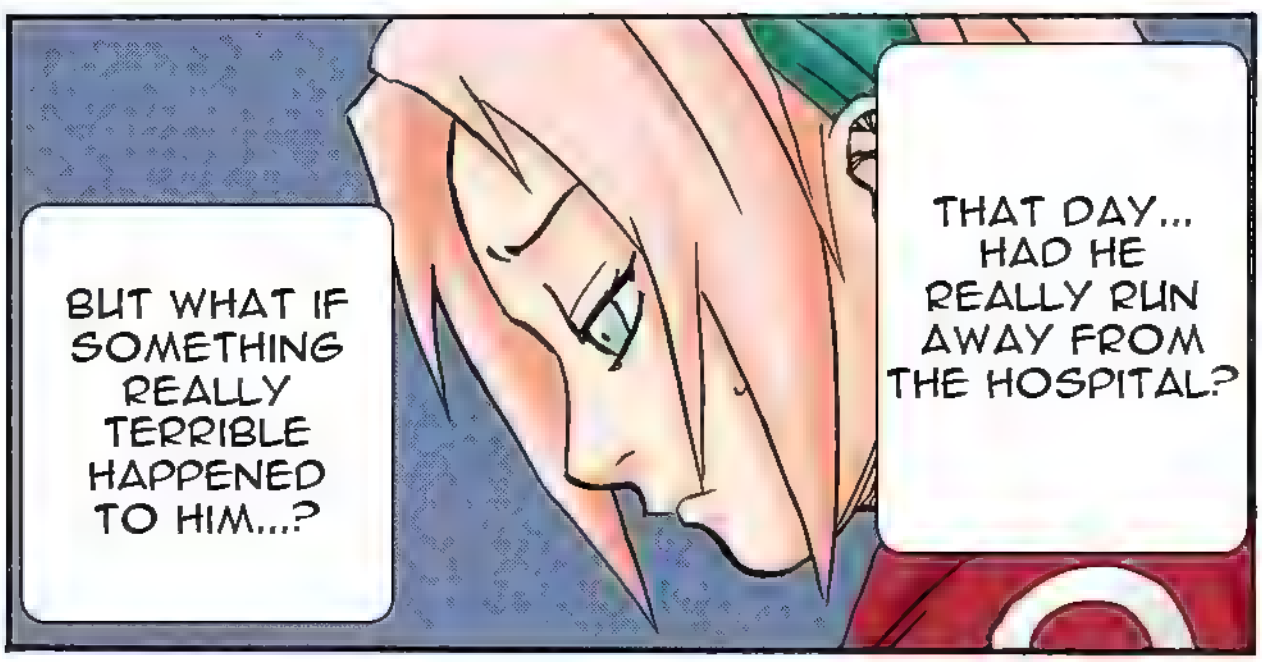

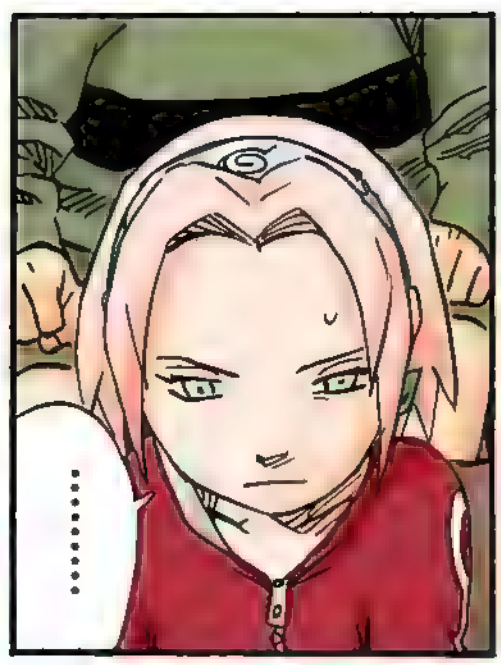

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IF THAT'S THE CASE, WE MIGHT NEVER FIND HIM...

HE MAY ALREADY BE IN OROCHIMARU'S CLUTCHES...

SASUKE IS STILL NOWHERE TO BE FOUND?

WE STILL HAVE SEVERAL BLACK OPS TEAMS OUT SEARCHING FOR HIM, BUT... THERE'S NO TRACE...

!

.....

...UNDER-STOOD.

WELL, WELL...

AH...

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.....

.....

I KNOW YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT SASUKE, BUT...

EITHER WAY, NARUTO'S MATCH IS FIRST, SO WHY DON'T YOU STOP FRETTING...

...AND CHEER HIM ON?

.....

LORD KAZEKAGE!

スッ

...YEAH...!

COLORED MANGA.COM

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ドクン

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YOU MUST BE TIRED FROM YOUR LONG JOURNEY.

OH NO... I'M HAPPY TO MAKE THE TRIP.

OF COURSE, YOU'RE STILL HALE AND HEARTY... BUT THE VOYAGE MIGHT HAVE BEEN A BIT HARDER ON YOU, LORD HOKAGE.

PERHAPS YOU OUGHT TO CHOOSE YOUR SUCCESSOR SOON...

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……

...FOR ANOTHER FIVE YEARS, AT LEAST.

...HA HA... WELL, DON'T BURY ME YET! I HOPE TO CONTINUE HERE...

WELL THEN...

WE OUGHT TO BEGIN...

...FOR THE CHÛNIN SELECTION EXAMINATION!!

AHEM, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, ESTEEMED GUESTS... WELCOME AND HEARTFELT THANKS FOR GATHERING HERE IN KONOHAGAKURE...

COLORED MANGA.COM

...BETWEEN THE EIGHT CANDIDATES WHO ADVANCED IN THE PRELIMINARIES.

WE WILL NOW BEGIN THE MATCHES OF THE FINAL ROUND...

IT SEEMS YOU ARE MISSING ONE...

...EIGHT CANDI-DATES...?

.....

...AND ENJOY!

PLEASE SIT BACK...

大将

NARA SHIKAMARU
TEMARI
ABURAME SHINO
KANKURO
UCHIHA SASUKE
GAARA
HYUGA NEJI
UZUMAKI NARUTO

BEFORE WE BEGIN, I HAVE A FEW ANNOUNCE-MENTS...

LOOK HERE!

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!

!

!

...DID THAT DOSU GUY WITH-DRAW?!

I WAS DOWN FOR AN EXTRA MATCH, BUT...

LOOK AGAIN AND CONFIRM YOUR ASSIGNED OPPONENT.

THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW LAST-MINUTE CHANGES.

WHAT?!

HEY! HEY!!

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...HE'LL LOSE BY FORFEIT!

IF HE DOESN'T ARRIVE BY THE START OF HIS OWN MATCH...

SASUKE'S NOT HERE YET, SO WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN?

.....

THIS IS WEIRD... KNOWING SASUKE, I FIGURED HE'D BE HERE EVEN IF HE HAD TO CRAWL...

HM!

.....

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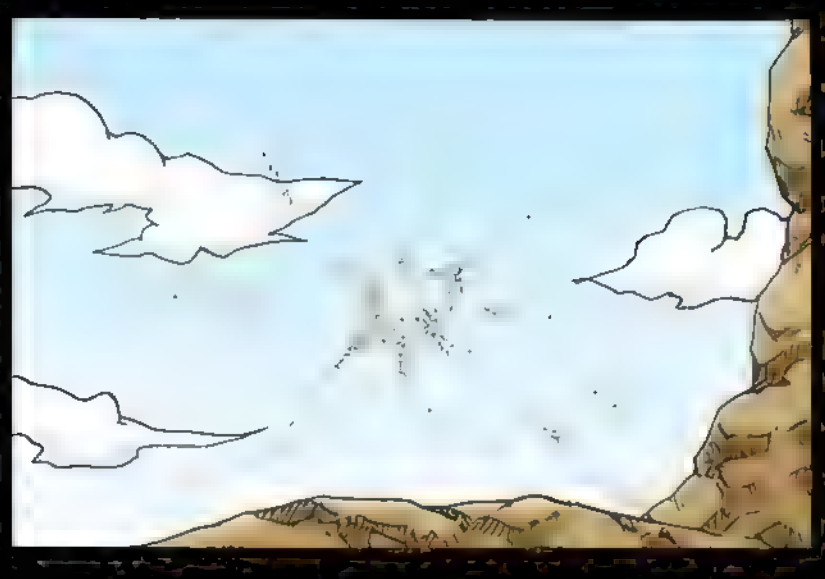

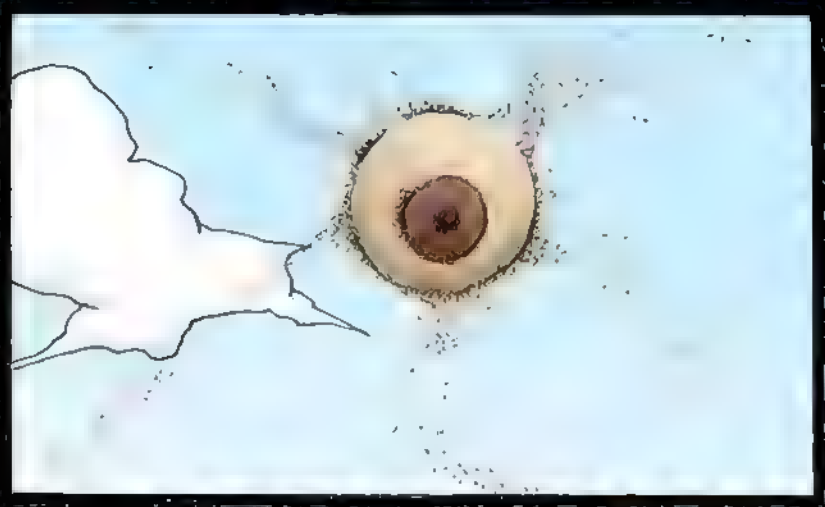

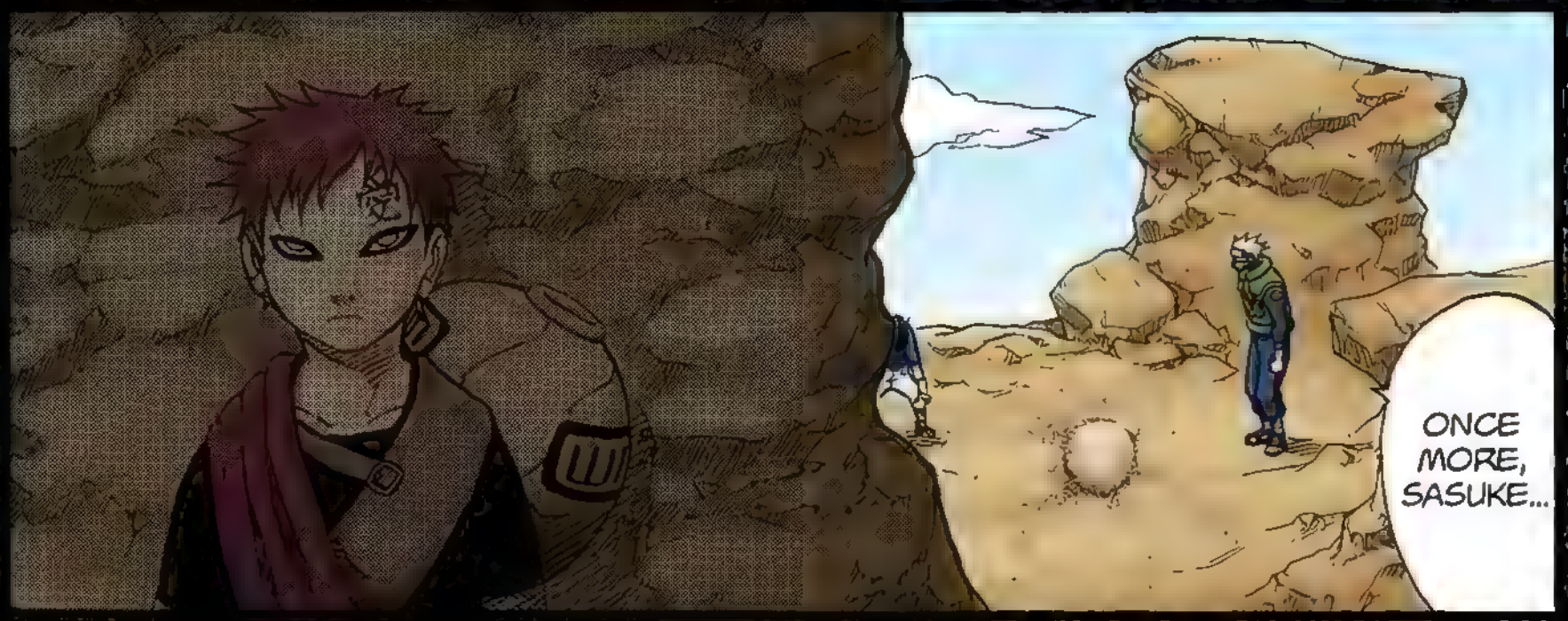
ONCE MORE, SASUKE...

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HERE I COME!

...WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?

.....

HE BETTER NOT HAVE KILLED HIM...

DON'T TELL ME... EVEN AFTER I TOLD HIM HOW IMPORTANT IT WAS TO AVOID ATTRACTING ANY ATTENTION...

.....

TO VERIFY MY EXISTENCE.

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THIS IS THE LAST EXAM.

LISTEN UP, ALL OF YOU.

...I'LL STOP THE MATCH BEFORE ANYONE'S KILLED. UNDER-STAND...?

...UNLESS I DETERMINE THAT A CLEAR WINNER HAS ALREADY BEEN DECIDED, IN WHICH CASE...

THE LANDSCAPE MAY BE DIFFERENT, BUT JUST AS WITH THE PRELIMS, THERE ARE NO SET RULES.

YOU FIGHT UNTIL ONE OF YOU DIES OR ADMITS DEFEAT...

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...AND HYUGA NEJI.

ALL RIGHT THEN... MATCH ONE, UZUMAKI NARUTO...

...THE REST OF YOU, PROCEED TO THE WAITING ROOM OUTSIDE THE ARENA!

YOU TWO, STAY DOWN HERE...

HEY HINATA, THERE ARE TWO SEATS OVER HERE!

PC PC

TH- THANKS.

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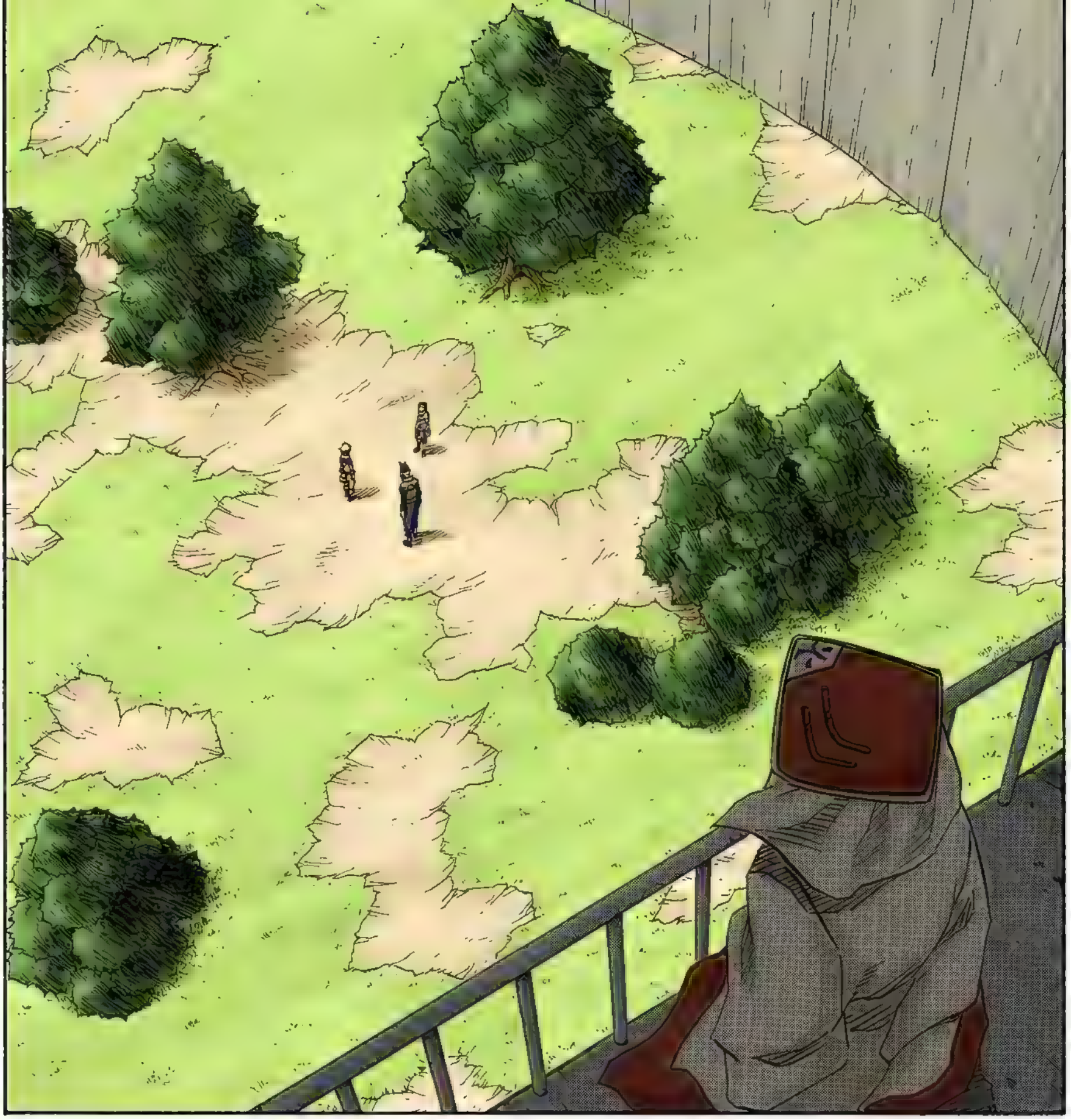

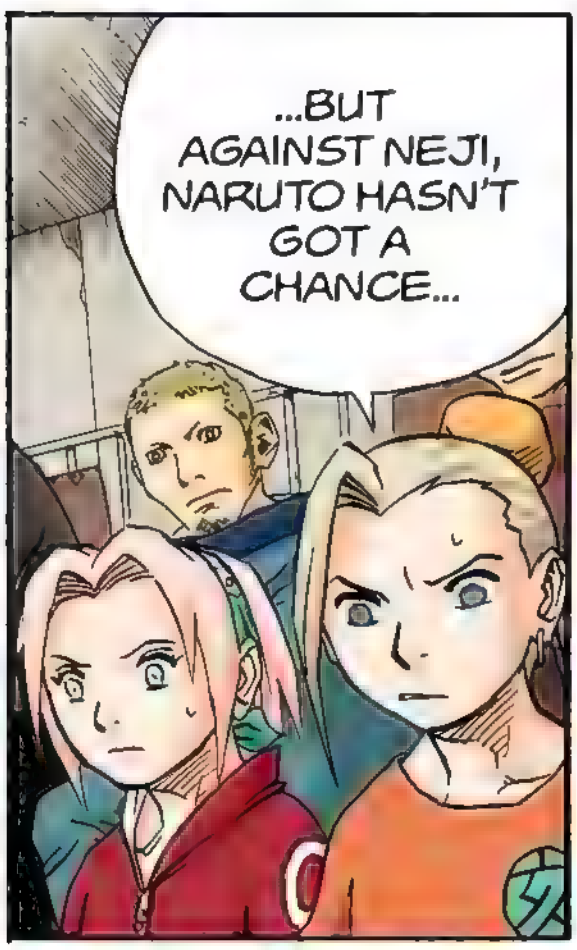

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...HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED BY NOW.

HMM... BUT ALL THE ONES WHO WERE HANGING ON THROUGH LUCK ALONE...

...I NEVER IMAGINED THAT SCAMP WOULD LAST SO LONG...

...AGAINST A MEMBER OF THE HYUGA CLAN, HE'S GOT ABSOLUTELY NO CHANCE AT ALL.

AND THIS NARUTO KID... HE DREW A TOUGH OPPONENT.

IF YOU UNDER-ESTIMATE HIM, YOU'RE IN FOR A BIG SURPRISE!

WELL... THAT'S WHAT I USED TO THINK, TOO... BUT...

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WHINE! WOOF!

WHAT...?!

WHINE!

WHAT IS IT, AKAMARU?

WHERE...?

WHY THE HECK ARE THERE BLACK OPS AGENTS HERE?

...OVER THERE...!!

...IS SOMETHING BIG ABOUT TO HAPPEN?!

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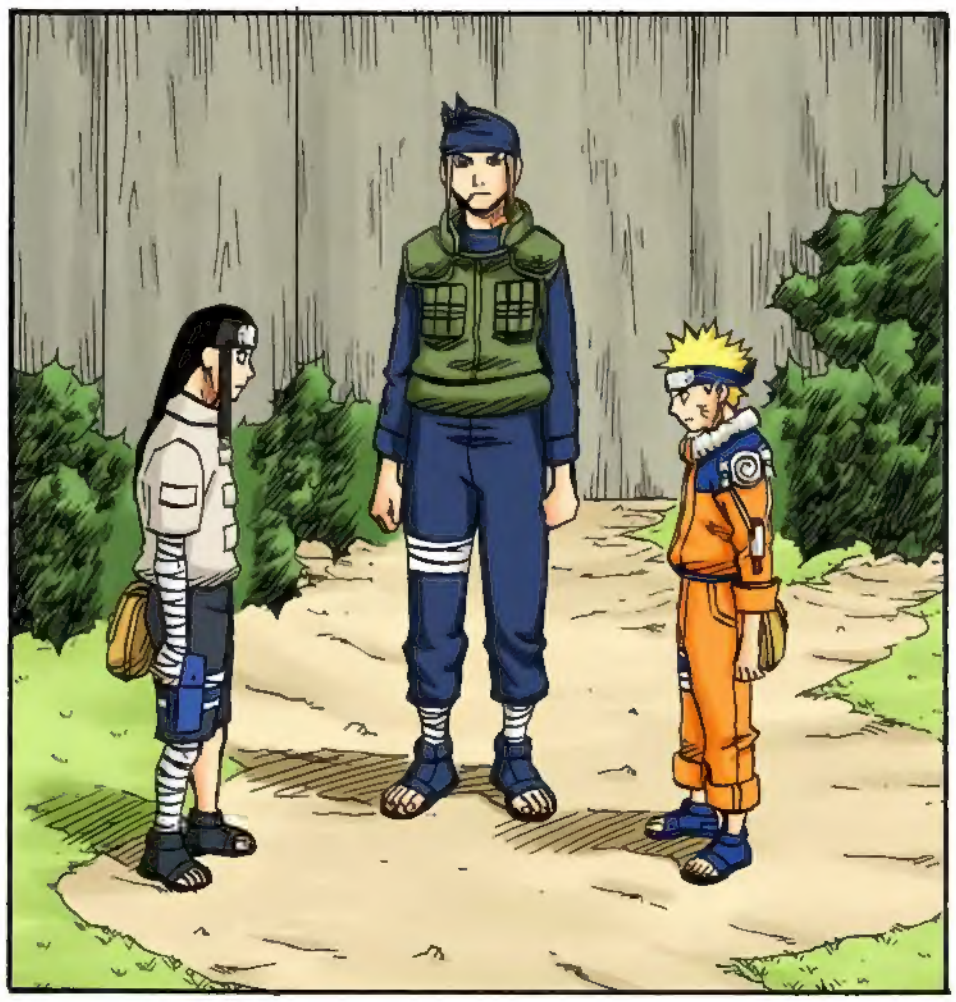

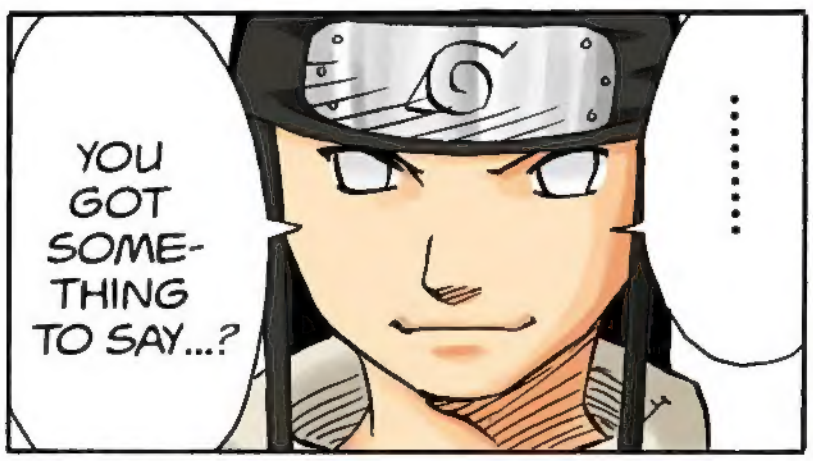
YOU GOT SOME-THING TO SAY...?
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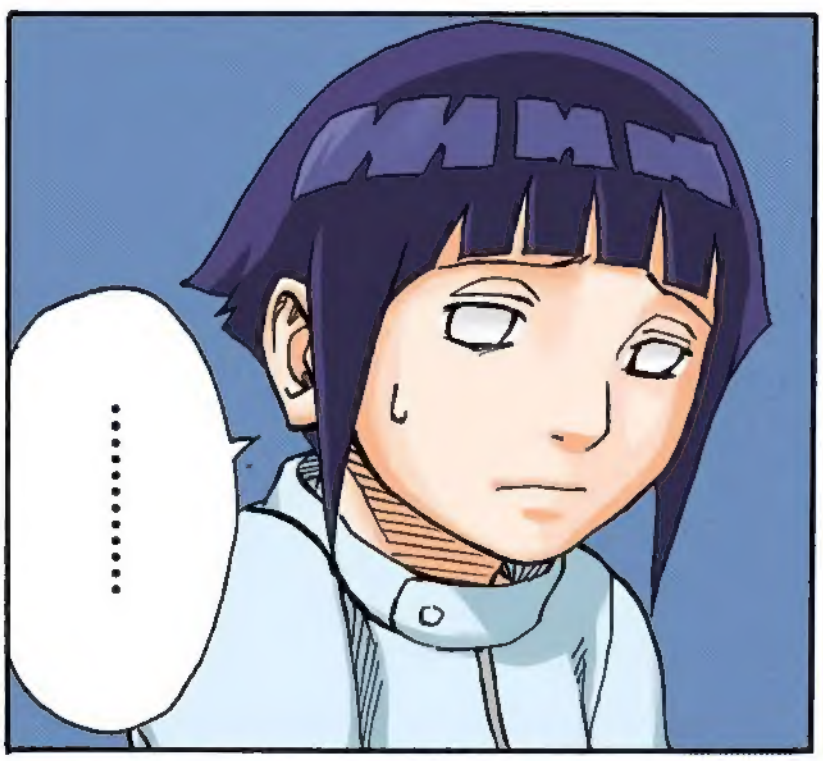
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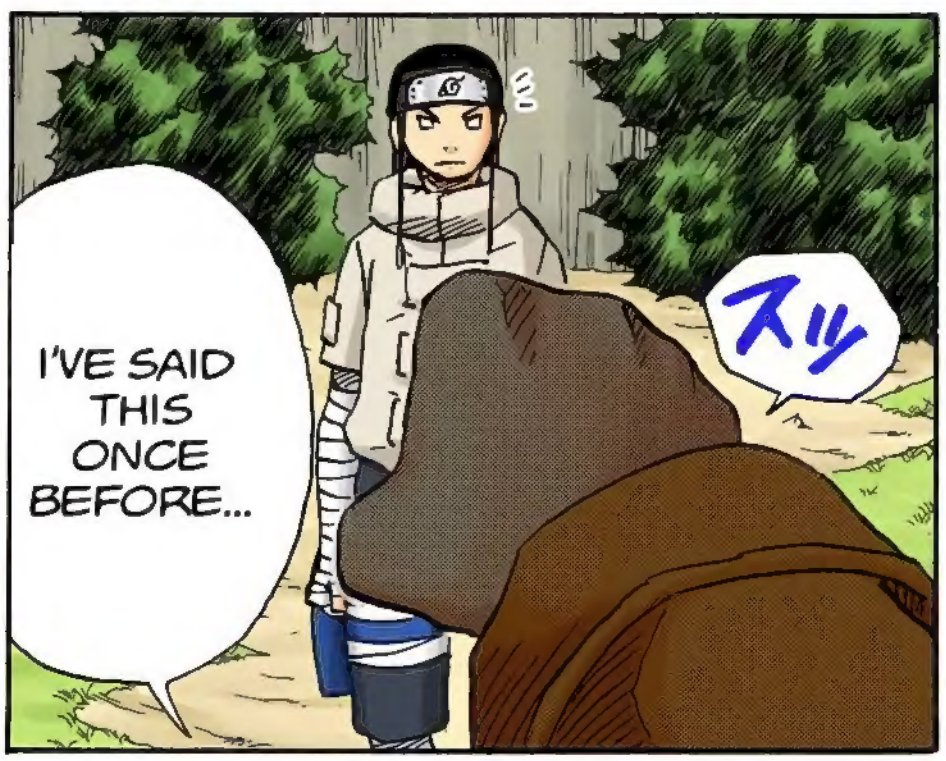
I'VE SAID THIS ONCE BEFORE...
スッ

I VOW TO WIN!!
COLORED
MANGA.COM

HE HAS ABSOLUTE FAITH IN HIMSELF... AS IF HE HASN'T GOT A SINGLE DOUBT...

ピキキ

BEGIN!!

NOW THEN... MATCH ONE...

LET'S FIGHT!!

QUIT YAPPING...

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THE DESPAIR IN YOUR EYES... WHEN THE TRUTH FINALLY DAWNS ON YOU...

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HO HO... IT'S MORE FUN THIS WAY ANYWAY...

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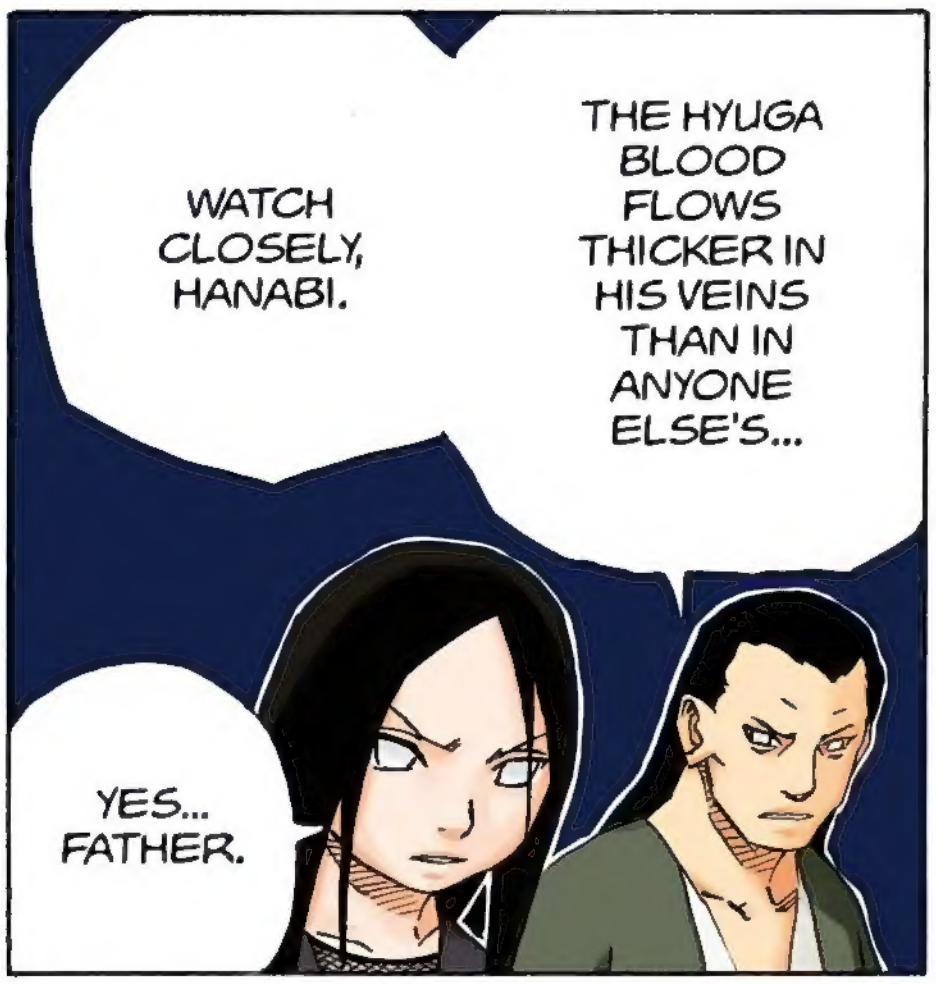

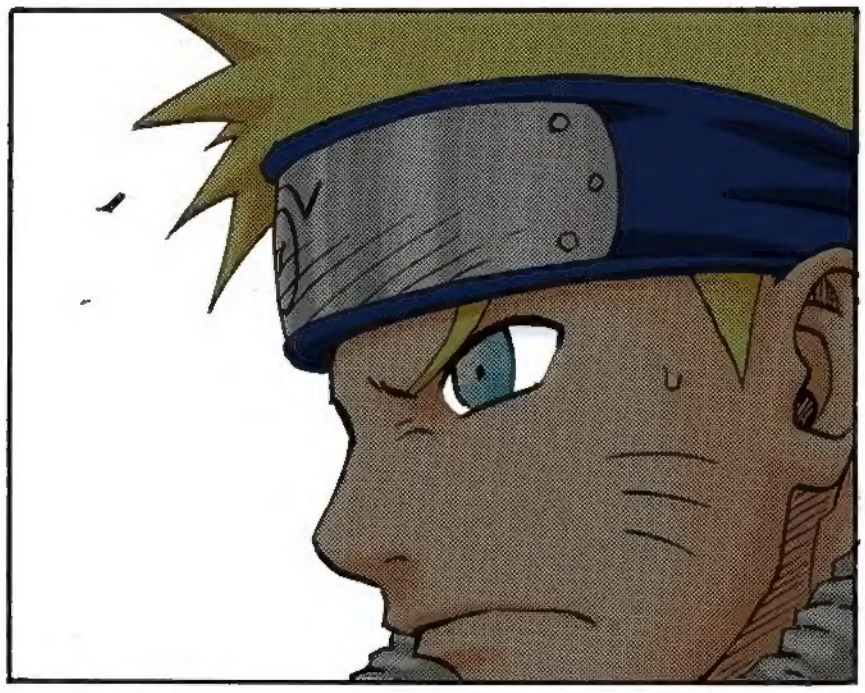

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